



**A HISTORY OF EUROPE**  
**PART II**



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39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4  
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53 NICOL ROAD, BOMBAY  
36A MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

114 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK  
221 EAST 20TH STREET, CHICAGO  
88 TREMONT STREET, BOSTON

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

480 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, TORONTO





# A HISTORY OF EUROPE

## PART II THE MIDDLE AGES

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*WITH 5 COLOURED MAPS AND 5 UNCOLOURED MAPS IN TEXT*

*NEW IMPRESSION* (1934)

*REISSUE*

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.  
LONDON ♦ NEW YORK ♦ TORONTO

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TO  
E. A. G.

*Made in Great Britain*

## PREFACE

A NEW edition of this book has allowed me to bring the narrative down to the Peace Conference at Versailles. I have also now added chapters on the course of English and British history. I had at first excluded the story of our own island from my survey, on the ground that readers of this book were likely to be already acquainted with the course of English history, and that histories of England and Britain, of every size and tendency, already abounded. But from the first friends and critics urged that the usefulness of the book would be increased by chapters dealing with the development of our own fortunes, and I have come to believe that they were right.

I have adopted, in writing these chapters, a rather different method from that which I had followed in the others. In the European chapters I avoided anything like allusion or discussion of doubtful points, and assumed that my readers had little or no previous knowledge of the subject. But in the chapters on England and Great Britain I have imagined myself to be writing for those who are already acquainted with the outlines of English history, and I have kept usually in view a comparison between the development of England and that of other European countries. I have also tried to suggest certain points of view rather than to give a detailed narrative, which in the space at my disposal was impossible.

There is another method of presenting general European history, practised both in Germany and in France, which has failed to recommend itself to me. There are books in both languages, of high credit and wide circulation, in which the main theme is a fairly full narrative of national history, differing in no marked way from that of the ordinary histories;

while the events of other countries are brought in from time to time as a sort of appendix to the national story. I cannot see that much is gained by this method. Events are not presented in their true proportions or in correct perspective, if they are always looked at from Berlin or Paris; and the attempt to judge them all from the meridian of London would be even less successful. If the history of Europe is worth study it is because the subject has a unity in itself, apart from that which belongs to the life of any particular state. Its great service is to correct national egotism, to allow of unbiassed comparisons between different systems of life and government, and to emphasize the interdependence of the different elements of the commonwealth of Europe. None of these objects can be attained if the point of view of a single state is maintained throughout.

I have tried to avoid making my book a compendium of dates and facts. Such books have their great value, and Freeman's "History of Europe" still occupies an honoured place on the shelves of most students of history. But my aim has been a different one. What has been said of the artist—"that his greatness is shown as much by what he leaves out as by what he puts in"—may be applied even to the humble labours of the writer of an historical text-book. My hope is that I have not mentioned names or events unless their importance or significance is made apparent in the text. I know that there are many great statesmen and many great battles, of which there is no mention in this volume.

I trust that no one will think that the serious character of the book is diminished by the fact that I have put a poetical quotation at the beginning and at the end. I have always felt that the wider the survey of history the stronger is the appeal which it makes to the feelings and the imagination, and that the most rigid application of historical science (if there be an historical science) cannot prevent history, when regarded as a whole, from drawing near to poetry. The famous chorus from Sophocles seems to me to give, as nothing else does, the wonder of man's record on earth; and Wordsworth's sonnet is the best expression that I have found of the sentiment with which a student of history naturally regards the future.

## Preface

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I have received much help from friends in the production of this book. Professor Appleton, of Sheffield, and Professor Hearnshaw, of King's College, London, were kind enough to examine the proofs of the first edition. Miss A. M. Cooke, my colleague at Leeds, and Dr. G. S. Veitch of Liverpool University, have gone through the chapters on English History. Major F. R. Dale, M.C., D.S.O., Headmaster of Plymouth Grammar School, gave me advice on the last chapter. My old pupil, Miss A. M. Evans, M.A., of the Normal College, Bangor, prepared the index for me. To all of these I tender my hearty thanks.

LEEDS UNIVERSITY,  
1920.





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## PART II

### THE MIDDLE AGES

#### CHAPTER I

#### The Final Triumph of the Christian Church within the Roman Empire

THE religious measures of Constantine encountered no great opposition during his lifetime ; the Pagan leaders and priests seem to have seen the rise of Christianity to a position of pre-eminence, if not with equanimity, at any rate, without any attempt at resistance. Yet the change was so great, and Paganism in its various forms was so linked with the life of the people, that it was not likely to disappear without some sort of struggle. Nor could it be said that the life of the emperor himself, during its latter part especially, was such as to recommend the Faith that he had adopted. He was, we have seen, a vigorous soldier and an excellent ruler ; but his domestic life was as unfortunate as that of the worst emperors in the Imperial series. The accession of Julian.

His last years were troubled by plots and conspiracies, and both the son and the wife of the emperor were executed on suspicion of complicity. Upon his death, in 337, the palace was for some time agitated by plots and struggles of the most violent kind, until, in 350, Constantius, the son of Constantine, reigned alone. We need not, however, pause to notice any of the details of the following years : we reach a more important event, when, in the year 355, Julian, the cousin of the emperor, was associated with him in the task of government.

The career of Julian is interesting in many must have been a soldier of rare ability ; in cor

the Rhine frontier he invaded Germany again and again, and clearly showed that the superiority of Roman arms and discipline under a good general was not yet over. Between Julian and Constantius, who had put to death a number of Julian's relations and friends, there was naturally suspicion and friction; and in 359 Julian's legions, being ordered to move from their homes on the Rhine frontier to defend the Euphrates against a threatened incursion of the Persians, mutinied, and refused to march. In the tumult that followed they saluted Julian as emperor, and he at last accepted the dangerous title, and thus declared war against Constantius, whom he had hitherto served in a subordinate position. Julian marched on Constantinople with great rapidity, but before he arrived there Constantius had died a natural death, and in December, 360, Julian was master of the Roman world.

The one supreme interest of Julian's reign is that Paganism made a last effort to overthrow the supremacy of the Christian Church, and to maintain itself as the religion of the empire. Many things seem to have contributed to this Pagan reaction. The high hopes which had been entertained of the peace and prosperity and virtue which were to come with the victory of the Christian Church, had been bitterly disappointed; there had been war, civil and foreign; and, as we have seen, the lives of the first Christian emperors rivalled in crime those of Nero and Domitian. More important probably was the fact that the Christians were now bitterly quarrelling with one another. There had, indeed, even before the reign of Constantius, been well-marked divisions among Christians, and eager rivalry between different doctrines and different ideas on Church government, but those rivalries and divisions had been intensified very greatly since the victory had been won. Africa, especially, was torn asunder by a religious struggle which had its obscure origin in the action of certain Christian officials at the time of Diocletian, who had handed over their sacred books to be burnt at the order of the emperor; but the meaning of the original struggle had long been lost, and different Christian factions were fighting against one another with a savagery which laid a large part of the province waste. Much more

serious than this obscure conflict was the great controversy which turned upon the definition of the nature of Christ. From the first the difficulty had been present with the leaders of the Christian Church, and the third century had seen various heresies turning on this point; but it is in the fourth century that it came to a head, in the greatest of all early heresies which is known as Arianism. Arius, who gives his name to the movement, was an ecclesiastic of Alexandria, where, more than elsewhere in the empire, religious controversy was pursued with heat. Arius defined the person of Christ as being of *similar* substance with the Father; whilst, on the other hand, the orthodox formula which was passionately, and in the end triumphantly, championed by Athanasius, declared that Christ was of the *same* substance with the Father. The difference has been by some regarded as a small one, and it is certainly a mistake to think of Arius as anticipating the views of modern rationalism; but it would seem that in this apparently verbal controversy, the character and the future of the Catholic Church were at stake. There was not at first any wide difference in ceremonies and ritual between the Arian and the orthodox churches; but if Arianism had triumphed there could have been no doctrine of transubstantiation, and no ceremony of the Mass: the priesthood would thus have been deprived of one of its chief titles to supremacy over the laity, and the growth of the Papal monarchy would have been rendered more difficult.

The General Council of Nicæa (325) had declared that the Arian views were heretical; but they were maintained nevertheless by great numbers, especially in the east of the empire. The authority of Rome was thrown throughout on the side of Athanasius. The controversy was not confined to professional theologians, but became, in a manner which is now difficult to understand, the excitement and passion of all classes. In the fury of religious controversy the unity of the Christian name was altogether forgotten, and followers of Arius pursued those of Athanasius with a bitterness of hatred, apparently greater than that which they directed against the Pagans. It was not unnatural, therefore, that many should



think that it was worth while considering whether, after all, some return to Paganism were not advisable.

It must be noted, too, that the new Paganism was something very different from the old. Cicero or Julius **The new** Cæsar—to go no further back—would hardly have **Paganism.** recognized in the views of Julian any resemblance to the faiths and the practices which had sat so lightly on their own consciences. We have already noticed that Paganism during the third century had been adopting a mystic tone that had at first been foreign to it, and was trying to gain an organization which should give it some chance of resisting the episcopal government of the Christian Church. All these tendencies culminated in the time of Julian ; he spoke of many gods, but he was himself essentially a monotheist, and he was especially devoted to the Sun god or Mithras, in whom he saw “the living and beneficent image of the intelligent Father of the world.” What was strongest in Paganism was all working in this direction. In the earlier centuries of Christianity the Pagans had been “light half-believers in their casual creeds,” but now among at least a large group of them their faith had become a real passion.

Julian himself had imbibed these ideas during his residence at Athens, which was now again a great centre of education, **Religious** and a stronghold of the new Paganism. His propo- **policy of** motion to the service of the empire had called **Julian.** him reluctantly away, but when he became emperor, his chief object was to put into practice the ideas which he had so ardently embraced from his Athenian teachers. His reign was a short one, and we can hardly tell what his schemes would have developed into ; but he declared religious toleration for all, and allowed the Jews to rebuild again their temple at Jerusalem. All Christian symbols disappeared from the coins and the inscriptions of the empire ; sacrifice in the Pagan temples was renewed again with an ardour which arose in many from a desire to please the emperor. Julian, too, saw how great an advantage Christianity drew from the strictness of its organization and the special training of its priesthood, and desired to give to Paganism something of the same kind. He insisted on rigid rules of morality for the

priests, and proposed to bind them together in a common organization. The existence of Christianity did not at first seem threatened by these measures; but if Julian had lived much longer he would inevitably have been brought into direct conflict with Christianity, for he excluded Christians from all teaching posts, preferred Pagans to Christians for all offices in the State, and deprived the Christian priesthood of the financial privileges which had been given to it by Constantine.

The attempt at religious reconstruction was, however, soon cut short by military dangers. The Persians at this time under their king, Sapor, were a dangerous and an aggressive people. It was necessary for Julian to lead the armies of Rome against them. His campaign was conducted brilliantly, and for a certain time with success. He crossed the Tigris and prepared to strike into the heart of Persia, but was forced to retreat by want of supplies, and on his way back was killed under obscure circumstances.

Legend says that his last words were "Galilean, thou hast conquered," and certainly with the death of Julian passed away the last chance for the victory, and even for the continued existence of Paganism. The truth seems to be that there was not in any large section of the people of the Roman Empire any vital belief in the old faith, or any strong desire to maintain it. It was one of Julian's most bitter disappointments to find that what was to him a passion and an enthusiasm was held by the majority of those who surrounded him in a very different and quite lukewarm fashion. It is clear from the ease with which the extinction of Paganism was carried out that there was neither faith nor zeal among its supporters.

Other important things were happening at this time. The Barbarians were forcing their way over the frontiers of the empire, but we may turn away from them for the moment, and carry on the religious movement up to the final victory of Christianity. Julian was succeeded by emperors who reigned for a short time, and left no enduring mark upon the history of the empire; but then in 379, there came to the throne the Emperor Theodosius. His reign is in

many respects a very important one. We shall see in the next chapter how it marks an important stage in the relations between the empire and the barbarians. It is a reign, too, which saw a great step taken towards the completion of the majestic fabric of Roman law, and it is perhaps as co-operator in the work of codifying the Roman law that the name of Theodosius most deserves to be remembered with gratitude by posterity. In this chapter we are thinking only of his religious policy.

He was a Christian, and a Christian not of the Arian type to which most of the emperors since Constantine had belonged, but a zealous adherent of Athanasian orthodoxy ; and it was during his reign that Arianism was finally subdued and Paganism extinguished. There are no striking incidents in the last struggles of Paganism, and for the most part the victory of Christianity was won against a very feeble opposition. Paganism found its chief stronghold in the city of Rome itself, and even in the Senate of Rome the weakness of Paganism was shown, when, in the year 384, the statue of the Goddess of Victory was moved from the Senate house. Ten years later Theodosius himself came to Rome. A formal debate is reported to have been held in the Senate in the presence of the emperor as to whether Jupiter or Christ should be regarded as the patron of the city. The emperor's presence left no doubt as to the issue ; the Senate declared for Christianity, and that declaration was at once put into effect by a series of laws. All Pagan sacrifices were henceforth forbidden upon pain of death, and worship of the old deities of Rome, even without sacrifice, was prohibited. The temples of the Pagan deities, many of them among the most wonderful structures that human hands have reared, were in all parts of the Roman Empire attacked, desecrated, and in many instances destroyed ; the columns and marbles of some were transferred to Christian Churches, and a few, such for instance

as the Pantheon in Rome, and the Parthenon at Athens, were converted entirely to Christian uses, and were thus preserved in their entirety. The victory of Christianity was unfortunately accompanied by acts of vandalism on a scale perhaps unexampled in

**The  
end of  
Paganism.**  
  
**Disappearance of  
classical  
civilization.**

history, and it was not only stone and carved work that suffered. The poets, and philosophers, and even the historians of classical antiquity had been put forward by the Pagan champions as rivals of the sacred books of the Christians. It was therefore natural that Christianity, in its triumph, should condemn these; and with few exceptions, of which Virgil's poem is the most important, the great works of classical antiquity passed into oblivion from which they were only rescued by the dawning of the Renaissance some thousand years later. It is wrong to think of the Middle Ages as being altogether a period of darkness; yet in one sense it is true that they were so. The light which had streamed from Greece upon Rome, and from Rome upon the whole civilized world, could not be altogether extinguished; but to a very large measure it was obscured, and the human race suffered thereby a most disastrous loss.

One detail of the life of Theodosius deserves a passing notice, for it reveals to us the nature of the new force that had entered the world with the triumph of the Christian Church. We shall see in the next chapter that Theodosius had established good relations with the Goths. He was, therefore, the more exasperated to hear that the people of Thessalonica had risen against Gothic soldiers stationed there, and had murdered several officers. The Emperor determined to exact a terrible revenge and thousands of the citizens were slaughtered in cold blood. It was a terrible deed, but in itself would not deserve to be chronicled in an age that sees so many terrible deeds. What is of importance is the protest which it met with and the punishment which it incurred. The leading figure in Christianity at this time was St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan; he expressed in strong terms his abhorrence for the emperor's deed, and when the emperor presented himself at the Church of Milan, he was excluded by the Bishop's orders from entrance, and from participation in the sacraments of the church. Nor was he readmitted into the Christian communion until he had expressed his sorrow for what he had done and submitted to public and humiliating penance. The successor of Julius Cæsar humiliated himself

before a priest! The master of all the legions of Rome prostrated himself before the representative of the crucified Jew! No revolution in History is so important as that which is represented by these facts. From this time onward, emperor and Church, sometimes in alliance and often in opposition, are the two great forces of the Middle Ages, and it is not until the claims of both of them had been overthrown or weakened that the Middle Ages can be said to come to an end.

The Church histories of Robertson and Milman; Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; Miss Alice Gardiner's *Life of Julian*. Gibbon's treatment of this period is one of the best parts of his history, and, in spite of his own strong opinions, surprisingly fair. For Arianism, see Professor Gwatkin's article in the *Cambridge Mediæval History*, Vol. I.

## CHAPTER II

### The Gothic Victories and the End of the Roman Empire in the West

IN the last chapter we saw how the Christian Church achieved a complete victory over its Pagan opponents. But during the years covered by these important events the Roman world was also occupied with a great struggle against her barbarian foes from beyond the frontier. The victory of the Christian Church no doubt contributed to the victory of the barbarians, for the attention of the Roman government was distracted, and it was not able to devote the whole forces of the empire to the struggle against the intruders from the north.

From the year 250 onwards, various races which had hitherto stood beyond the frontiers of the empire—most of them of Germanic origin—forced their way gradually within the empire, and many made for themselves permanent homes there. These events are sometimes called the barbarian invasions, sometimes the migration of the peoples; it is these

events which are usually alluded to when the Fall of the Roman Empire is spoken of.

Before we trace the steps by means of which the barbarians in their different divisions made themselves masters of certain parts of the Roman Empire, it will be well to consider some of the general features of the movement. We may notice, in the first place, that the barbarian invasions did not by any means come as an irresistible flood ; there was no single moment when the defences of the empire fell, and the barbarians rushed in.<sup>1</sup> The Romans, indeed, maintained for a long time their military superiority over these enemies. But in spite of the Roman victories the barbarians gradually pushed forward, and soaking into the Roman Empire rather than overwhelming it, they dispossessed the Roman authorities, and made themselves masters of some of the fairest provinces of the empire. We may note further that these barbarians had nearly all of them been in the service of the empire, before they became its enemies and conquered it. We have noted already the Roman practice of enrolling in their ranks soldiers from beyond the frontiers, and we have said that in this way dangerous lessons as to Roman discipline and tactics were carried back beyond the frontiers. The victories of the barbarians were due very largely to the fact that they had learned from and in the Roman armies the methods of warfare which they now used against them. It is also curious to note that these invaders who are represented, and for the most part rightly, as courageous warriors, were in nearly all cases themselves fleeing from a more dangerous foe. They flung themselves upon the empire partly, doubtless, because the defences of the empire were growing weaker, and they desired to possess themselves of its wealth, but largely also because

<sup>1</sup> It may be noted that Milton's fine lines (P.L., I. 356)—

“A multitude like which the populous North  
Poured never from her frozen loins to pass  
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons  
Came like a deluge on the South and spread  
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands,”

give a misleading impression of the movement.

they were attacked in the rear by an enemy more numerous, more warlike, and much more barbarous than themselves, and were driven by defeat to find a refuge within the empire.

The word barbarian is in itself often misleading. The invaders of the Roman Empire were far behind the Romans

**Character of the Goths.** in culture and knowledge, but they were nearly all of them ready to receive what Rome could teach. They were impressed by the knowledge and the splendour and the order of the Roman world, and were not anxious to destroy Roman civilization but rather themselves to claim a part in it. This is especially true of the Goths, who were the first to gain decisive victories over Rome, and whose name is sometimes used to cover the whole of the barbarian invaders. Since they had attacked Rome in the third century they had settled in a loosely organized kingdom which stretched across the centre of Europe from the Black Sea to the Baltic, and had its chief seat of authority near the Crimea. When first the Romans knew them they were heathens, but when, 100 years later, they invaded the empire again, they had accepted the teaching of Christianity. The great missionary

**Ulfilas.** of the Goths was Ulfilas (311-381), who lived in Constantinople at the time when the city was Arian, and had himself learnt Christianity in the Arian form. It was in that form that he carried it back to his fellow-countrymen, hardly aware probably of the gulf which separated Arianism from orthodoxy, and little dreaming of the consequences that would flow to the Gothic nations from their acceptance of the Arian heresy. He translated the Bible into Gothic, and the new faith seems to have spread, with great rapidity, and without encountering serious difficulties, to the whole Gothic race. The Goths, then, of the fourth century, were Christians whose lives often did credit to the religion which they professed. They were probably not much lower in the scale of culture than the English in the days before Alfred the Great, and they were ready beyond any other people to absorb the civilization of the Romans.

They were attacked in their homes in central Europe about the year 374 by the Huns, a central Asiatic race of Tartar origin, which now, driven by some unknown impulse, flung

itself upon Europe. The Goths were overwhelmed on the banks of the river Dniester; and soon they came down to the Danube, imploring the Romans to admit them. There were many Goths already within the bounds of the empire; the northern parts of the Balkan Peninsula were devastated by war and largely uncultivated; and the demand of the Goths was granted. In 376 they began to pour into the lands south of the Danube, as many in numbers, says a contemporary, as the sands of the seashore. The emperor, Valens, who had granted them permission to come, was alarmed at their unexpected numbers, and soon destroyed by his suspicious and irritating policy the friendly feeling which he had created by admitting them. War soon broke out between the Goths and the Romans, and in 378 there came the decisive battle of Hadrianople. The Romans were the attacking party, and at first victory seemed likely to crown their efforts, but then they were overwhelmed by the unexpected attack of a large body of Gothic cavalry, and their army was utterly broken. It was a defeat as complete as that which the Romans had suffered at Cannæ from Hannibal, but from this defeat there was no recovery; the Romans had lost their old elasticity and endurance, and, though the Romans in the future sometimes gained victories against their barbarian foes, the tide of success ran, from this date, more and more decisively against them.

The death of their leader and the outbreak of plague prevented the Goths from reaping as great advantages from their victory as might have been expected, and in 383 the emperor, Theodosius, after having gained some successes against them, made with them an important treaty. By this treaty a large territory in Thrace and in Asia Minor was to be ceded to them, and they on their side promised to provide the Roman armies with forty thousand men, who were to be commanded by Gothic officers, but were to be subject to the general direction of the Roman emperor. It was a dangerous experiment, thus to turn the victorious enemies of the empire into its defenders; but while Theodosius



lived the arrangement worked well, and had he found efficient successors, might have proved a permanent gain.

But on his death in 395 the empire was divided between his sons Arcadius, who reigned at Constantinople, and Honorius, who reigned in Italy. It is interesting to note that though Honorius reigned in Italy he did not reside in Rome.

Rome was no longer thought impregnable, and the emperors therefore, from this time on, preferred to live in Ravenna, a city with no beauty of situation, situated among dreary marshes and fever-haunted swamps, but for this very reason safer against an invader than the proud city of the seven hills. The transference of the capital from Rome to Ravenna was not the only thing which marked the decadence

of the Roman power, for more and more the Romans entrusted their defence against the barbarians into the hands of men of barbarian origin.

We have seen how large a body of Goths had been admitted into the Roman armies, but apart from this, we find that there were vast numbers of barbarians serving in the Roman legions, and that not only the soldiers but even the officers and the highest generals are usually men not of Roman, but of barbarian birth.

The year 395 which saw the death of Theodosius and the succession of his feeble sons, saw also the elevation to the Gothic monarchy of the great Alaric, the most famous name in the whole of Gothic history. He belonged to the Visigoths or Western Goths. He was a man ambitious and ardent in war, but at the same time honourable in his dealings, and a sincere Christian. He was on bad terms with the Eastern Empire, and his first enterprise, directed against Constantinople, was foiled by the fortifications of the city. He marched southward into Greece, and after having done great damage there, he returned back and settled in the Northwest of the Balkan Peninsula. Then in 401 he turned his attention Westward to Italy, owing, perhaps, to the incitement of the Emperor Arcadius, who wished to relieve his own dominions from so dangerous a neighbour. Alaric was not by any means always, or at once,

victorious in Italy. He was met in the neighbourhood of Verona by Stilicho, the Vandal chieftain of the Roman armies, and was defeated and driven out of Italy with considerable loss. Stilicho enjoyed a great triumph, and boasted that the race of the Goths had been for ever destroyed. But a few years later came an event which opened up a prospect of easy success to Alaric. The Roman emperor was naturally jealous of his great soldier, whose influence doubtless left little real power to the weakling who sat on the Imperial throne. In 408 Stilicho was put to death by the emperor's **Murder of** orders, and his soldiers thereupon indignantly **Stilicho**. refused to serve the emperor any longer and streamed in many thousands into the armies of Alaric. Thus, when Alaric re-invaded Italy in the year 408 there was neither a general nor an army to resist him. He passed down through Italy, making no attempt upon Ravenna, and arrived before Rome. Thrice he laid siege to Rome, and had he wished to do so, he might have mastered the city some time before he did. But it is a striking feature of Alaric's character that he admired the civilization of Rome, while he fought against her armies, and desired nothing better than to find some place of honour and of power within the limits of the Roman dominion. Thus the siege of Rome was broken up a first and a second time, when Alaric believed that he had gained the position which he sought. Disappointed in his hopes and deceived by the emperor and the Romans, he resumed the siege for the third time in 410. We know little of the details of these great events, for the Goths had no historians, and the **Fall of** Romans did not care to tell the story of their **Rome**. disaster, but we know that, when the forces of the city had been reduced by starvation, Alaric assaulted the gates, and at last the barbarian made himself master of the most famous of the world's cities. There was no doubt slaughter, and there was plunder, but Alaric kept his soldiers in some order, and soon passed out from Rome to complete the **Death of** conquest of Southern Italy, and there, in the far **Alaric** South a fatal disease fell upon him, and he died and was buried in the river bed of the Busento, whose waters were turned aside by the labour of his army to allow of the preparation of his grave.

Alaric's conquest of Rome is in no sense the end of the Roman Empire, and yet of the events that lead to the disappearance of the Roman Empire in the West, it is the most striking and perhaps the most important. So great was the fame of Rome, so general the belief which identified Rome with the world's government, that its fall was an event which seemed to show men that the very foundations of the society which they knew were being shaken under them. The Christians specially had to meet the charge that Rome, victorious while she held to her old gods, had fallen as soon as she accepted Christianity; and it was to meet this charge that St. Augustine, one of the greatest figures in the early history of Christianity, wrote his book, *The City of God*. The death of Alaric relieved the Roman world from the pressure of a great danger, for the Visigoths, deprived of their leader, were far less dangerous. Yet there was no sign of any recovery of the power of Rome, or of any probability that she would be able to drive the barbarians from their territories. Rather, other barbarians followed in the tracks of Alaric and the Visigoths, until before long all Roman territories west of the Adriatic passed into the hands of one or other of barbarian races, and at last the Imperial name, after having been reduced to the most empty form, entirely disappeared in the West. The successor of Alaric as king of the Goths was Ataulfus. He procured the hand of Galla Placidia, the daughter of the Emperor Theodosius, and by her Ataulfus was induced to leave Italy, and to establish a Visigothic kingdom in the south of Gaul and the north of Spain. There it endured for three centuries until finally it was overthrown, not by the Roman power, but by new and more strenuous barbarian swarms.

Meanwhile, another barbarian race cut off from Rome one of her fairest provinces. Africa had become, under Roman rule, one of the most civilized parts of the empire, and it contributed

much especially to the literature and the organization of the Christian Church. In 429 the province of Africa was over-run by the army of the Vandals. The Vandals were akin to the Goths, and had at first been

considered more sluggish and unwarlike than the men who had followed Alaric on his great enterprise. They had, however, under their leader Genseric, marched through Gaul, and made themselves masters of large districts of Spain, and it was from Spain that they were invited into the province of Africa in consequence of disputes between the Governor of that province and Rome. They made themselves masters of the land with surprising ease, though the chief city, Carthage, did not fall into their hands until 439. The Vandals make none of the appeals to our sympathy that are made by the Visigoths; they were a cruel, plundering, piratical horde, and the civilization of Africa was almost effaced by their conquest, though that conquest would hardly have taken place if the province had not already been torn asunder by religious feuds. It was amidst these disasters that St. Augustine, himself an African by birth, and Bishop of the town of Hippo, wrote *The City of God* to justify the Christian faith.

Shortly after the conquering raid of the Vandals, came the first assaults of an enemy more terrible, and it seemed at first more dangerous, than either the Vandals or Goths. **The Huns.** We have already spoken of the Huns. Victorious on the Dniester they had pressed westward, and now began to attack the Roman Empire itself. They had in Attila a great ruler: his is the one name among the Huns which is remembered by posterity. The Huns deserve the name of barbarians which is erroneously attributed to the Goths. They were a nomad race, not caring to settle long in a single place, knowing little of the arts of life, contemptuous of Roman civilization, and held together by a rudimentary government. It was only when controlled by some great soldier such as Attila undoubtedly was, that they became an overwhelming danger to their neighbours. In 446, Attila invaded **Attila** the Eastern Empire, swept along the north of the **in Gaul.** Balkan Peninsula, and made his way even to the walls of Constantinople. The land became a desert where he passed. Then in pursuit of fresh plunder he turned northward, and marching through Germany, flung himself in 451 upon the frontiers of Gaul. A portion of Gaul was still in the hands of Rome, while, as we have seen, a portion of it had also been

surrendered to the Visigoths, and as Attila's assault equally threatened Romans and Visigoths, they joined to resist him: In 451 the united forces of the Visigoths and the Romans, under the last great soldier that the Roman race produced, Aetius, met the invading Huns probably near Troyes, though the battle which followed has passed into history as the battle of Chalons. It resulted in the repulse of Attila ;

**With-  
drawal and  
death of  
Attila.** Gaul was saved, and Attila retired by the valley of the Danube. The Hunnish danger, however, had only vanished from one point of the Roman world to re-appear at another, for in 452 Attila penetrated through the eastern passes of the Alps and invaded Italy. He destroyed the city of Aquileia ; he pushed on as far as Milan, and there he was said to have been turned back by the supplications of Pope Leo and the religious awe which was connected with his name and office. He retired beyond the Alps and died in 453.

But no victory and the death of no single opponent could save the Roman world from its barbarian foes. The Roman emperor at this moment was Valentinian, but it is characteristic of the time that we hardly need to know his name or to consider his character. He was jealous of Aetius as Honorius had been jealous of Stilicho, and in 454 Aetius was murdered. His death immediately preceded, though apparently it did not cause, the second barbarian occupation of Rome. Genseric, the Vandal leader, was settled in Carthage and looked round for more plunder. The Vandal power was strong upon the sea, and in 455 a Vandal fleet appeared at the mouth of the Tiber and a Vandal army marched on Rome. The city could make no resistance. Genseric was induced by the entreaties of Pope Leo to abstain from massacre ; but he plundered the city as it had never been plundered before, and many of the treasures of Rome passed to Carthage and disappeared.

Yet for twenty-one years the phantom of the Imperial name still subsisted on Italian soil, and still within the protection of the marshes of Ravenna there was some one who called himself emperor, and surrounded himself with something of the pomp of a Court. But the reality of power during these

dreary years rests not with the emperor, but with the great soldiers of barbarian origin, who in succession commanded his armies and exercised power in his name. In 476 one of these soldiers, Orestes by name, raised his own son, Romulus Augustulus, to the Imperial title, and intended, no doubt, to govern in his name. But the real power lay with the soldiers, and these men, irritated by an attempt to curtail their pay, rose in mutiny under a chieftain called Odoacer. Orestes was killed; his son, the puppet emperor, was deposed; and Odoacer was master of the situation. Had he wished he could have made himself emperor, or have thrust that empty honour upon any candidate he chose, but he cared to take neither of these courses. He took the Imperial crown and the purple robe and the other insignia of office, and sent them to the emperor at Constantinople with the intimation that Italy had no further need of an emperor of its own, asking only for himself the title of "Patrician." The application to Constantinople was a recognition of the supremacy of the Eastern Emperor over Italy; but his authority was purely nominal, and it was Odoacer who held the reality of power.

The end  
of the  
Roman  
Empire in  
the West.

Odoacer,  
Patrician,  
476.

Such were the events of 476; not important in themselves, nor attracting very keenly the attention of contemporaries, they nevertheless mark the end of the Roman Empire in the West where it had arisen, and wherein its greatest strength had been found. It is not indeed the end of the Roman Empire, for the rulers at Constantinople still called themselves Roman emperors, and the empire continued to exist there in changing forms, for close on a thousand years. But in the lands west of the Adriatic Sea the Roman Empire passed away. Britain, Gaul, Spain, Africa, and Italy itself were in the hands of the barbarians. The emperors in Constantinople did not acquiesce in the new state of things. They regarded Vandals and Visigoths and the government of Odoacer as intruders on territory that belonged of right to them; and soon, as we shall see, an attempt was made, attended with brilliant though transitory success, to reconquer the lost lands of the West. But the ruler of Constantinople had no hold

on the loyalty of the Western people, alien from himself in race, language, and character. The future of Western Europe lay with the barbarian peoples, who soon were to be reckoned as barbarians no longer.

Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders* gives a brilliant narrative of these events which is a great contrast in style to Gibbon's history. Hodgkin's *Dynasty of Theodosius* consists of lectures summarizing the history of the time. Bradley's *Goths in the Stories of the Nations* is a useful résumé. Bury's *Later Roman Empire*.

## CHAPTER III

### Italy in the Sixth Century

THE victory of Odoacer left Italy completely in his hands, but he was almost immediately challenged by a new barbarian enemy, the Ostrogoths. These were closely related and in race to the Visigoths, whose career we have traced. They had been forced to serve in the ranks of the Huns, and had shared in the triumph and the repulse of Attila. They had been for some time settled on the Eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea, and Theodoric, their great ruler, had resided for ten years at Constantinople, at first as a hostage, and then as the ally or servant of the emperor. This long experience of the government and the land, the religion and society, the strength and the weakness of the Imperial capital, exercised a far-reaching influence on all Theodoric's career. In 489 he invaded Italy at its most vulnerable point, through the passes that is of the north-east. He had been urged on to the exploit by the Emperor Zeno, who desired to overthrow—by whatever means—the usurping power of Odoacer.

The Ostrogoths were victorious after a long and confused struggle. Odoacer was defeated in three battles; he retired to Ravenna and defended himself there for some time, but

the city was forced by famine to surrender, and Odoacer was treacherously slain by the conqueror. Theodoric was master of Italy.

Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, was king of Italy from 489 to 526, and his reign presents many features novel and interesting. The centuries from the second to the eighth show us for the most part nothing but the failure of the old Roman order and government in the Western world; but the career of Theodoric shows us an attempt, for some time successful, to build as well as to destroy, and to create a stable order out of the ruins of the Roman Empire by the energy of the Goths.

**The Constructive effort of Theodoric.**

He fixed his capital at Ravenna, and that strange city of the marshes, already decorated by various churches and public buildings, received notable additions to its architecture from him. In his buildings and in his political work he associated with himself eminent men of Roman origin. His chief minister was Cassiodorus, a Roman; his chief secretary was the Roman Boethius, the last important name in Latin literature. He assumed the ceremonies and he adopted the forms of government which had been developed by the Eastern Empire. He aimed at uniting Gothic strength with Roman culture, and he came near to founding a stable state on this promising basis.

**Theodoric in alliance with Roman culture.**

His dealings with religion are especially noteworthy. He was himself an Arian, and showed no inclination to abandon that form of Christianity, which had special attractions for the Goths: but he did his utmost to establish good relations with the orthodox church, and declared himself against all measures of persecution. He was on friendly terms with the bishops, and he treated the Pope with respect, and even with deference. There is no such instance of religious toleration in Europe for another thousand years, and yet his religious policy was not successful. The Catholic Church claimed exclusive dominion, and was quite unwilling to tolerate the separate existence of an Arian Church in Italy. It remained aloof and hostile; and thus the force of religion, usually the strongest uniting force in the Middle Ages,

**Religious policy.**



worked in Italy for disruption and estrangement. Among the causes of the failure of Theodoric's plans his Arianism was one of the chief.

The Ostrogoths occupied, for the most part, the country districts. One-third of Italy is said to have been appropriated to their use, while the main part of the old Italian stock lived in the towns. Until nearly the end of Theodoric's reign Italy enjoyed unwonted quiet. With peace and security, commerce, which had been long declining, began to revive. Even the Pope declared that Italy "breathed again after the tempest of continual wars." It almost seemed as though the era of war and of invasion was over, and there are few promises whose failure history regrets more than that which Theodoric's rule for a time held up. He ruled with justice and with success. In Italy and in Western Europe his was unquestionably the first power. He was related by marriage or alliance to most of the barbarian states which had recently been formed: with the Burgundian, the Frank, the Visigoth, the Vandal; and he exercised over them a sort of precedence.

Yet the last years of his reign present us with a disastrous contrast. The old Roman population and the Church remained still hostile; and as Theodoric drew towards old age the question of the succession raised great difficulties. He had only one legitimate daughter, and that daughter's husband died. The next claimant to the throne was a child five years of age. Theodoric believed himself to be surrounded by plots, and he struck, perhaps blindly and cruelly. Boethius was executed. John, the Pope of Rome, was thrown into prison under accusation of intrigue with Constantinople and died there. Thus the future was full of grave problems when Theodoric died in the year 526.

To understand the next chapter of Italian history we must go to Constantinople. There was no sign of decay there; rather the empire seemed to be recovering its strength, and the barbarian attacks ceased to alarm. The admirable situation of Constantinople was working its natural effects. The wealth of the

Asiatic provinces flowed into the city: Syria and Egypt provided it with corn and various sources of wealth. The West was indeed lost, but the empire was probably stronger because it was smaller. In the year 527 there came to the throne Justinian, who reigned until 565. In the long imperial annals there is hardly a more conspicuous name than his, though it may be doubted whether his triumphs did not bring rather harm than good to the empire. He was married to Theodora, who was at first a dancer on the stage, and whose rise to the Imperial throne was an event unparalleled in the annals of the Roman world. It was her beauty which attracted the emperor at first, but she showed later a strength of character and a political insight which made her a worthy helpmate for him. The name of Belisarius also will always be closely associated with that of Justinian. He has been **Belisarius.** called the world's greatest soldier, and though this is an untenable exaggeration, he won amazing victories with apparently small resources, and raised the glory of the Roman arms to a height which might seem to rival all that had gone before. The Imperial armies were composed of many and strange elements; barbarians filled up nearly half the ranks—Huns, Gepids, and Heruli—but the empire had also discovered in the Isaurians of Asia Minor a population of splendid military qualities, and these hardy mountaineers formed the backbone of the Roman armies. The armies of the sixth century offer a strange contrast to those which had triumphed under Julius Cæsar and Trajan. The **Nature of his armies and tactics.** legionary with the famous short sword had disappeared, and his place was taken by the mounted archer, and it was with this novel weapon that Belisarius won his chief victories. Nor were his armies ever large. It is amazing with how few troops he achieved conquests which added vast tracts of territory to the dominions of his master. He trusted to skilful tactics, to the mobility of his troops and to the rapidity of his marches to overcome the larger and more clumsy masses of his barbarian opponents.

The emperor had serious difficulties with the city population in the early years of his reign, and Belisarius achieved his first victories against the unruly mobs of the city, who

were excited by religious fanaticism and social distress. But when these dangers were past, and he had become conscious of the strength of his army and his **Imperial reconquest of Africa.** those western provinces which he had not ceased to regard as his legitimate possessions. It was upon Africa that his first blow fell; and when Belisarius, in 533, landed on the African coast he found the Vandals utterly unable to resist him. These people of the North, once so terrible under Genseric, had become disorganized, luxurious, and incapable of military effort. Two battles were enough to decide the fate of the rich province, and before the year was over Africa seemed firmly joined again to the Imperial fabric. Then from Africa Belisarius turned to a greater booty. He passed with 7500 men to Sicily in 535, and occupied it without difficulty; then in 536 he landed in South Italy.

The Ostrogoths, like the Vandals, had quickly lost much of their early vigour, but they had not fallen so low, and they **Conquest of Italy.** showed themselves much more capable of recovery. The cause of the decline is difficult to discover, but we have already dwelt on the hostility of the Church, and of the Roman population, and victory as usual had destroyed something of the unity and vigour which the Ostrogoths had possessed when they attacked Italy. Belisarius carried all before him. Theodahat and Witigis, the successive leaders of the Ostrogoths, showed no skill in the defence. Naples and Rome fell. In vain the Goths tried to recapture Rome, though their army numbered 150,000, while Belisarius had only 5000 soldiers. In 540, owing to mutiny in the Gothic ranks and the pressure of famine, Ravenna itself, the administrative capital of Italy, fell into the hands of Belisarius. He returned to Constantinople and enjoyed a vast triumph. The military glory of Justinian seemed the greatest in Europe. We may add here, though out of proper chronological order, that the recovery of the Imperial power extended beyond Africa and Italy; a portion of Spain was also conquered, and in 550 the south-east of that peninsula came into the hands of Justinian.

But from this time on the fortunes of Justinian and his

general began to be somewhat obscured, and the end of his reign by no means fulfilled the promise of the early years. There was serious financial difficulty. Justinian was a constant and ambitious builder, and the great cathedral of Santa Sophia in Constantinople and many churches in Ravenna and elsewhere still survive to testify to the skill of the Imperial architects; but the drain of these building operations exhausted the Imperial Exchequer. Then war came with the Persians, and though success in the end attended the Imperial armies here also, the Persians were not driven back without a struggle. But the true cause of the comparative failure of the later years of Justinian's rule in Italy is probably to be found in the condition of Italy itself. The Italians, in their dislike of their Ostrogothic rulers, had welcomed the invaders, who were at least in name Romans. But with the war had come desolation, famine, and plague. The revived prosperity of Italy, which we have noted under Theodoric, gave way to misery never surpassed in the unhappy land during the Middle Ages, and when the Imperial restoration was completed they found that the burden of the new government was much greater than that of the old. There were complaints of the exactions of the tax-gatherers, and the general discontent gave the Gothic power a chance of revival. Above all, the Ostrogoths found a great leader in Totila, who is, along with Theodoric and Alaric, the glory of the Gothic name. He was a soldier of real power, and a Christian of sincere piety, just and humane beyond the standard of the time. Under him the Gothic armies once more spread over Italy. Belisarius was sent out to Italy again, but he had not sufficient forces at his disposal to stem the tide of Gothic victory. He succeeded indeed in reoccupying Rome which had been seized and then abandoned by Totila, but the success was transitory. He was no longer on good terms with Justinian, and in 548 he was recalled, and Rome fell once more into Totila's hands.

All Italy was subject to Gothic rule with the exception of Ravenna, which now as always seemed nearly impregnable behind its fortifications and its swamps. The empire, however, was not yet resigned to the loss of Italy, and in 552 a

larger army was sent over under the command of an old man, Narses, once a servant of the palace, but clearly possessed of real military genius. He marched by land into Italy, and having reached Ravenna, advanced upon Rome, and at Taginæ, near the summit of the pass across the Apennines, he met Totila. In the battle that followed the Goths were defeated, and Totila died of the wounds which he received. There was much fighting after this; but the Goths could not maintain themselves, and in the year 553 they applied for permission to leave Italy. It was granted, and they marched across the Alps, joined themselves perhaps to the Visigoths, and disappeared from history. Thus Justinian's reign ended with success. Theodora died in 548, and in 565 death-carried off both Belisarius and Justinian.

We have said that it is questionable whether the victories of Justinian did not weaken the empire, and whether he should not be regarded rather as the cause of the ruin than of the restoration of the Imperial power. But there is one task to which he set his hand which proved of vastly greater and more enduring importance than all the victories of his armies.

**The codification of Roman law.** It was during his reign and largely through his guidance that the work of codifying the laws of Rome was brought to an end. The work had been begun centuries earlier; it had been carried forward

by Theodosius, and great Roman lawyers had continuously laboured at the task. It was now at last concluded, and the whole fabric of Roman law was made accessible to the world in a form logically arranged and not too large for comprehension or reference. Among the forces that acted upon the mediæval world, and indeed upon all the world, from this time forward, Roman law was one of the most important. It was not until somewhat later that it began to be studied by the nations of the West, but when they awoke to its importance, its reasonableness, its justice, and its humanity, seemed to them like a second revelation for the guidance of the destinies of man.

To return to Italy: its reconquest by Narses brought no settled order, no prosperity to the country: but it brought a heavy burden of taxation; and when the Imperial armies were withdrawn the country was without any strong defence. Soon

**The Barbarian Invasions**

Map showing the boundaries of the Eastern and Western Empires around A.D. 390, and the movements of various barbarian groups (indicated by dashed lines with arrows and dates).

Key locations and movements include:

- Western Europe:**
  - Britannia:** Romans (43-410)
  - France:** Franks (486), Burgundians (455), Visigoths (418), Romans (418-476)
  - Spain:** Visigoths (418), Romans (418-476)
  - Italy:** Lombards (568), Ostrogoths (488), Romans (476-527)
  - North Africa:** Vandals (429-476), Romans (476-533)
- Eastern Europe and Asia:**
  - Scandinavia:** Swedes (561), Goths (561)
  - Central Europe:** Huns (453), Alans (409), Goths (418), Romans (418-476)
  - Black Sea:** Goths (418), Romans (418-476)
  - Constantinople:** Goths (418), Romans (418-476)
  - Asia:** Persians (602-628), Arabs (632-661)
- Other Movements:**
  - From the North:** Huns (453), Alans (409), Goths (418)
  - From the East:** Goths (418), Romans (418-476)
  - From the South:** Vandals (429-476), Romans (476-533)

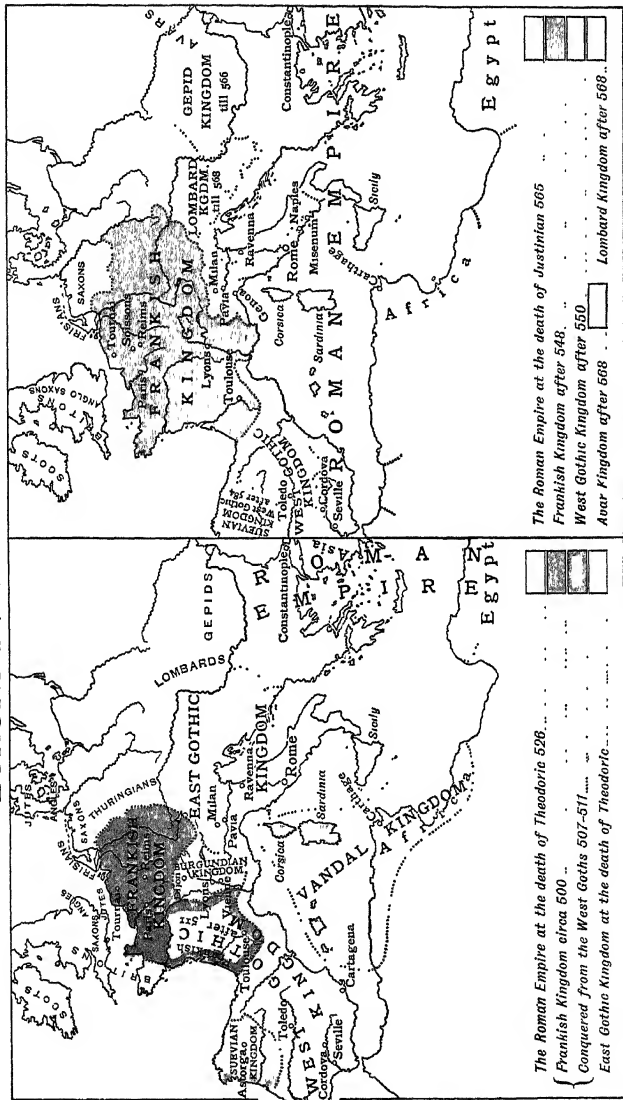
Boundary between the Eastern and Western Empire circa A.D. 390, shown thus: ---

Emery Walker, sc.

## Barbarian Invasions.

a new barbarian enemy prepared to take advantage of the situation. Among those who fought for Narses at Taginæ, was a large band of Lombards, a German race, whose earlier obscure fortunes and wanderings we need not make no effort to trace. They had seen the richness of the land, and though they withdrew after the victory had been won, fifteen years later they invaded in force. The country was desolate and helpless. Little help came from the East, and little by little the Lombards found themselves, if not the masters of the whole peninsula, at least the strongest force there. The Lombards did not form a single kingdom, like the Visigoths and Ostrogoths. They had indeed a king ; but they yielded him a doubtful obedience ; and their bands spread without plan of campaign or unity of design throughout Italy. The Eastern Emperors still clung to important places where they held garrisons ; thus Ravenna remained in their hands until 742, and they always endeavoured to maintain the connection between Ravenna and Rome. They held also Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia, and important fortresses in the heel and toe of Italy ; their navy was supreme, and the sea coast was always liable to their raids. But except in the places that we have mentioned, the Lombards held sway. Their capital was Pavia in the Northern plain, and south of the Apennines, Tuscany, and the lands of Central Italy fell into their hands. Their power was more loosely organized than that of the Visigoths or of the Ostrogoths, and the Lombard king from his capital at Pavia in the north held but a shadowy control over the Lombard dukes of Trent, Benevento, and Spoleto. On their first arrival many of the Lombards were heathens, but gradually they adopted Christianity, and though their Christianity was at first of the Arian type, it passed ultimately into orthodox Catholicism. This must be regarded as one of the most important facts in the development of their nation. In character and in talents they are far less attractive to us than their Arian predecessors, the Visigoths and Ostrogoths, and they seem to have been more hated by the population of Italy. But the religious barrier which separated the Goths from the Italians was ultimately removed from between the Italians

# EUROPE IN THE VI CENTURY







and the Lombards. The two nations were thus able to blend and to intermarry, and whilst the Goths have left little or no trace on the development of later Italian history, the Lombards have left their name stamped on the northern plain of Italy, and have contributed permanent elements to the population and the civilization of the peninsula.

Gibbon and Hodgkin as before. Hodgkin's *Life of Theodoric*. Dr. Hodgkin has also published a translation of the *Letters of Cassiodorus*, which are of great value for the administration and ideas of Theodoric. For Justinian, in addition to Gibbon, Oman's *Byzantine Empire* is useful. For the codification of Roman law, see Gibbon, Ch. XLV.

## CHAPTER IV

### The Constructive Forces of the Middle Ages—the Papacy; Islam; the Franks

ALL that the Gothic powers had attempted to build had proved unstable and transitory, nor were the efforts of the Eastern Empire to restore its organization and power in Italy and the West successful for long; the old civilization lay everywhere in ruins. At first sight there seems no sign of any new structure that was to emerge from among them. But there is no period of history which is merely one of decline and failure, and when we look more closely into the sixth and seventh centuries we may see already those forces growing which were destined, by action and reaction, to produce the characteristic features of the Middle Ages.

It is the organization and the power of religion which mark, above all, the Middle Ages, and it is to this topic that we must first look. The Christian Church had been progressing uninterruptedly during the whole of its existence, but during the sixth century it began to assume a much stronger organization and to exhibit much more obvious power. There are two chief agencies by which

it assumed that mighty authority which it was to possess for so long: the first is the Monastic system, the second is the Papacy.

Monasticism was no new thing; long before Christianity groups of men and women had withdrawn themselves from the world in order to live a purer life. India **Origins of** knew them well, and even in Rome the Vestal Virgins **Monasti-** present some analogies to the convents of later **cism.** years. Soon after the rise of Christianity we may observe, especially in the east of the empire, the same tendency strongly developed. We see hermits fleeing in great numbers into the Egyptian deserts; we see individual recluses, such as St. Simeon of the Pillar, establishing themselves in various forms of solitude and self-denial; even in Italy we may dimly see various groups retiring from the world for religious reasons. But what had happened hitherto was spasmodic, without discipline and liable to grave excesses. In some instances those who called themselves hermits were little better than **Saint** robbers. It was St. Benedict (480-543) who gave to **Benedict.** monasticism the form in which it proved later to be one of the formative forces of European history. He was not the founder but he was the law-giver and the organizer of monasticism. The monasteries which were established under his rule marked a great change from the ascetic practices of an earlier period. Those who entered them took perpetual vows and pledged themselves, not for a period, but for life, to celibacy and obedience to their chief. In the second place, their life was to be one of constant labour, of labour in the Church and in the Monastery, but of labour also in the fields; they were the teachers and the farmers of their age. In the third place, although the monastic system in Protestant countries is often associated with the solitary life, there was nothing against which St. Benedict so clearly fought as solitude for the monk. His followers lived together, prayed, slept, worked, and taught together; they were to act in every detail, not as individuals, but as a community. We may note further—though this feature is not so important at first as it proved subsequently to be—that each monastery managed its own affairs and admitted the authority of no bishop of the neighbourhood,

but only of the head of the Church, the Pope himself. In admitting to his order St. Benedict shows the most absolute disregard for station, rank, wealth, or race. Within those walls at least barbarian and Roman, bond and free were equal.

The social influence of monasticism was very great, though it is difficult exactly to analyse it. The services rendered by the monasteries to industry and to agriculture are plain. By establishing convents for women, and by allowing women to hold high authority in them, it is certain that the position of woman was indefinitely raised, nor can it be doubted that, in an age when literature and education were sinking lower and lower, it was in the monasteries that the sparks were kept alight which subsequently lit the revival of learning in Europe. But historically the importance of the monasteries is to be seen chiefly in the service which they rendered to the spread of the Church itself, and especially to the maintenance of the authority of the Pope. They were often in conflict with the neighbouring bishop, but they always preached the duty of obedience to the head of the whole Church. Each phase in the history of the Papacy is characterized by some corresponding development of monastic institutions, and each monastery may be regarded as an outpost or a fortress of the authority of papal Rome.

Soon after St. Benedict had done his work, the organization of the Church, as a whole, received a great impetus from one of the greatest of the Popes, Gregory the Great (590-604), who may be regarded as the founder of the Papacy as distinct from the Bishopric of Rome. It was Gregory from whom came the first impulse towards sending the missionaries to England, by whose means the Faith was planted again in the south of the island, though in the north and west it had not been wholly trampled out by the invasions of the heathen Saxons. It was also due to his efforts that the Lombards drew near to the Catholic Church, if they did not quite enter it. Their King Agilulf was an enterprising and ambitious ruler and frequently in conflict with the Pope on questions of policy and territory. But his wife,

Theodelinda, was a devout Catholic, and through her agency the king allowed his eldest son to be baptized as a Catholic, and the conversion of the whole race was prepared.

If we look to his development of the papal power, the chief features are these. We see the Pope gaining an authority in Italy greater than that of any other single ruler. The growth of the papacy. Bishops of Rome had received from Justinian large powers in secular and judicial matters ; but never before had the authority of the Roman See been nearly so great as it now became. (Italy was still scourged by the rivalries and contests of her rulers. The Eastern Empire was represented by the Exarch who resided in Ravenna. He was in constant strife with the Lombard king in the north, and the Lombard dukes in the centre and south of Italy. The Franks—that great German race which was destined so powerfully to affect the history of Italy—were already in occupation of certain districts in the north. In the north-east a new Turanian race, the Avars, akin to the Huns, poured down on to the Lombard plain and did frightful damage. The power of the Eastern Empire was sinking, the Lombards were divided against one another. Amidst this political chaos the Bishop of Rome, or as he must henceforward be called, the Pope, appeared as protector of the people and the maintainer of order. The Church, too, advanced in power and in wealth ; great possessions came into its hands, and a large part of the Pope's energy was devoted to the excellent and humane administration of the "patrimony of St. Peter." He devoted, too, much attention to the ritual, the music, and the services of the Church, and doubtless by these means the Church was able to make an appeal to the non-Christian world more powerful than she had hitherto made. It was not only what he did but what he was that made St. Gregory one of the greatest figures in the early history of the Church ; the reverence which was felt for him subsequently raised him to the rank of a saint. It is certain that the organization of the Church has never lost the trace of the impulse given by his powerful hand.

Gregory never knew of the existence of his most important contemporary, for Mahomet (it is of him that we must now speak), though thirty-four years old at the time of Gregory's

death, had not yet forced himself and his faith upon the attention of mankind. The story of its rise is in every way an amazing one. There was little preparation for Mahomedanism, and its victories were won against enemies that seemed strong and well prepared. The Eastern Empire had come, in the year 610, into the hands of Heraclius, and he proved himself one of the most successful soldiers in the Imperial line. He had to fight against the Persians, who had recently invaded Palestine and Syria, and he defeated them in a brilliant campaign. He penetrated to Nineveh, and in 628 forced peace upon the Persian king on terms eminently satisfactory to the empire. Yet immediately after these splendid victories the Imperial armies came into collision with the forces of Mahomedanism, and soon lost in the conflict their former prestige and confidence.

The new religion rose in a part of the world that was almost unknown, for Arabia had never offered inducement enough to the Romans to try and conquer more than a small stretch of it. The inhabitants lived an almost nomad life, withdrawn from the attention of civilized powers; but it was in this unpromising region that Mahomedanism arose. The population had been affected by the religious currents of the time; there was some Judaism, some Christianity, and along with both, many lingering superstitions of a primitive type. At Mecca special worship was paid to a large stone, the Kaaba, which was believed to have fallen from heaven. Here in 570 Mahomet was born. He lived for some years an uneventful life as camel driver and merchant, and at the age of twenty-five married the widow Khadija. Soon afterwards his musings and preachings began. We get little idea of their power by merely analysing their doctrines, yet we know that he preached the existence of one God only, and of many prophets, the chief of which were Moses, Jesus, and himself; he insisted on a higher morality than that which was habitual among his tribesmen, and he mitigated slavery; he accepted the polygamy which was already in existence, but placed restrictions upon it. His character must have been one of amazing energy and persuasiveness, and we may catch

some sense of the power which he exercised over his tribesmen from the more personal utterances of the Koran in which his preaching is enshrined. He held up with strange oriental eloquence the pleasures of heaven and the terrors of hell, and his fiery rhetoric allowed no one to doubt his words. We may catch perhaps something of the manner of his preaching in a passage like the following—

“When the Heaven is rent asunder  
And when the stars are scattered  
And when the seas are let loose  
And when the tombs are turned upside down  
The soul shall know what it hath done and left undone,  
O man! what hath deceived thee respecting thy Lord, the  
Generous,  
Who created thee and fashioned thee and moulded thee aright?  
Verily the righteous shall be in delight  
And the wicked in Hell-Fire.  
They shall be burnt at it on the day of doom,  
And they shall not be hidden from it.  
What shall teach them what is the Day of Judgment?  
A day when no soul can avail aught for another, for the  
ordering on that day is with God.”<sup>1</sup>

In 622 he was driven from Mecca, and his flight, the so-called Hegirah, has been taken ever since by Mahomedans as The Hegi- the first year of their era. In his exile he gathered rah, 622. his disciples round him and administered to them an oath of obedience and of morality. In 630 he re-entered Mecca in triumph, and died two years later in 632.

However we explain it, his preaching had kindled a fire in the hearts of the tribesmen of Arabia which made them a different people, which made them above all things a body of warriors, irresistible for over a century by all enemies that they met. The idea of propagating the faith by the sword is implied in much of Mahomet's own words, but he had no time to carry any such plan into execution. But after his death his successors and especially the Caliph Omar fell upon the Roman Empire of the East with deadly effect. The empire had just shown itself supremely vigorous and successful in war; but the way was prepared for the acceptance of Mahomedanism in many of the provinces by

<sup>1</sup> From Mr. S. Lane-Poole's version of the *Speeches and Table Talk of Mohammad*.

the furious theological controversies of the time. These were far more eagerly prosecuted in the East than in the West, and those opinions were embraced by a large part of the population which emphasized the unity of God and refused to recognize the complete divinity of Christ. These views had been combated and denounced by the Popes, but they were held by many who now preferred the strong Monotheism of Islam to the elaborate theology of Rome. In 634 the province of Syria was lost in spite of the efforts of the Emperor, Heraclius; in 637, Jerusalem was taken and Persia was overwhelmed. In 640 Egypt was conquered, and before the soldier emperor, Heraclius, died in the next year, he had seen all his early victories more than undone, by this new and strange force. With the conquest of Egypt there came a check in the advance of Mahomedanism, to be accounted for probably by the deserts which lie to the West of that country, but half a century later the movement began again. In 695 Carthage was taken by the infidel, and the Carthage. imperial power, which, as we saw, Belisarius had planted anew there, availed not to resist it. Westward still the Mahomedan horde streamed, and in 711, under their leader, Tarik, they crossed the Straits and landed at Gibraltar. In two years' time their bands had occupied the whole of the peninsula, had reached the Pyrenees, and were preparing to cross that mountain barrier. Would the future show that the centre and north of Europe was as powerless to resist as the East and the South had been, or would some new power arise which would be able to cope with these children of the desert? Such a power was found in the Franks, and it is to the Franks we must turn as the third great formative force of the early Middle Ages

The Franks were a German tribe of whom the Romans knew nothing until the third century. They were formed probably by a confederation of smaller tribes who took to themselves the name of Franks. We need not follow their dim early history and their occasional raids into the Roman Empire; their real history begins in 481 with the accession of their king Clovis. At this time the home of the Franks was upon the lower Rhine, both



banks of which they occupied ; those who lived towards the sea coast were known as the Salians, those who lived on the Rhine in the neighbourhood of Cologne were called Ripuarians. Gaul at this time was divided among various powers. In the valley of the Seine and on either side of it the Roman standard was still upheld by a patrician of the name of Syagrius, and this was the only fragment of the Roman Empire left beyond the Alps. South of the Loire was established the kingdom of the Visigoths ; the valley of the Rhone and the land to the east of it were in the possession of the Burgundians. A little further north, the upper waters of the Rhine were in the hands of the Alamanni. Before his death Clovis had made himself supreme in all these lands. We need not follow the career of conquest by which this great achievement was performed. There is in his war against the Alamanni, however, one incident which outweighs, in its importance for the history of the Franks, all his victories. He was married to Clotilda, a Burgundian princess and a Christian, and he had vowed that if the God of the Christians gave him victory in battle he would accept the Christian Faith. He saw in the victory which followed the answer to his vow, and he kept his word. In 496 he was converted and baptized, and the Frankish people followed his lead in religion as they had followed it in war. It is a momentous incident. Clovis does not indeed seem to have been a much better man after his conversion than before ; his career was full of vice and of crime, but the importance of the incident is that he thus entered into friendly relations with the organization of the powerful Catholic Church, for it was as a Catholic that he had been baptized. The Arianism of the Ostrogoths and Visigoths had contributed much to their ruin ; the orthodoxy of Clovis goes far to account for the very different fate of the Frankish power. It is to a great extent by the support and the statesmanship of churchmen that the Frankish monarchs were assisted in the great tasks which awaited them.

In 511 Clovis fixed his court at Paris, and died, and with his death the Frankish power fell rapidly from the high place

which he had won for it, and for a century its record is one of civil strife and almost impenetrable confusion. The words of Gibbon on this period are justified: "it would be difficult to find in any age more vice and less virtue." The royal line of Clovis, which is known as the Merovingian dynasty from a fabled ancestor Merwing, inherited little of his power and soon faded into insignificance, and, if the weakness of the royal line is strange, still stranger is the emergence by the side of the royal power, of another force greater than its own, that of the mayors of the palace. The origin of these officials is obscure. They seem first to have been what their name implies, domestic officers connected with the palace of the kings. Before the end of the century they came to be more powerful than the kings themselves, and, in an age when everything tended to become hereditary, their power also was handed on from father to son. By the side of the hereditary powerless monarchs there thus grew up another line of hereditary mayors, vigorous, powerful, and ambitious. The first great name among these mayors was Pippin of Heristal, who, in 687, by the battle of Testri, united again the northern Franks into one state lying on both sides of the Rhine. In 714 Pippin of Heristal died and bequeathed his authority to his son, Charles Martel.

Charles Martel may be regarded as the founder of the great dynasty which was to rise to the first position in Western Europe and re-establish there the imperial title. The great actions of his life took place in France, and his name is closely associated with the destinies of that country. But it is important to remember that he was himself a Frank, a man, that is, of pure German origin, speaking the German tongue, and unconnected with the old Gallo-Roman race. During the whole of his life-time the destinies of Frankland were in his hands, and it is hard to remember that there was always living at the same time some phantom king in whose name and by whose authority Charles nominally acted.

The authority of the royal power was by him raised to a much higher point. We see him, as we may see every strong

ruler of the Middle Ages, struggling with the great nobles of the land, and bringing down the barons and the dukes into subordination to his authority. Before his death

**Power and conquests of Charles Martel.** the one strong power in the land was that of the mayor, speaking in the name of the king. He extended the boundaries of Frankland by a series of wars beyond the Rhine against the Saxons and the

Bavarians, and though his work here was not final, it prepared the way for the very important conquests of his successors. The warm support which he gave to the Catholic Church and to the papacy within and beyond his own dominions is typical too of his whole house. It was a time of great missionary zeal and enterprise; many of the best-known missionaries were drawn from our own island, some sprung from the old British population, others from the newly converted Saxons. Thus in the low lands to the north of the mouth of the Rhine

**English missionaries in Germany.** St. Willibrod laboured with success, and Holland regards him as the founder of its faith. Further up the Rhine we see St. Boniface, an Englishman of Devonshire, preaching and carrying the Christian

religion among German races to the east of the great river. The efforts of these men were seconded by those of the great mayors of the Franks, and the missionaries in their turn did not a little to increase the prestige and the strength of their patrons. Between Charles, therefore, and the papacy there were relations of friendliness and mutual support, even before the great service which he rendered to the Christian faith by driving back the Mahomedan Moors in the battle of Tours (732).

Before we speak of this battle it may be noted that just about this time the Mahomedan advance was checked both in the East and in the West. In 718 a great Mahomedan army marched against Constantinople, and the city seemed in great peril; the infidel army, however, met with a most energetic resistance at the hands of the emperor, Leo the Isaurian, and in the end was repulsed from the walls of the imperial capital. Then, fourteen years later came the great triumph of Charles Martel. The Moors had overrun all Spain: they had passed beyond the Pyrenees and had taken many of the old Roman cities of the south of Gaul;

thus Carcassone, Nîmes, and Autun fell into their hands. It is unquestionable that the Christian civilization in the West was in very great danger. The Moors might turn their efforts against the central portion of Frankland, or they might pass through the Alps into Italy and threaten Rome herself. Their attack fell upon Aquitaine, the district lying to the south of the river Loire. The duke of this land was defeated in his first encounter with the Moorish leader, Abderahman. The forces of Islam poured northward in apparently irresistible force and threatened the lands of the Loire. The Duke of Aquitaine had not been on good terms with Charles Martel, but now he appealed to him, and in 732, Charles led the Frankish forces to his assistance. The allies met the Moors near Poitiers, though the battle has always been called the battle of Tours. The struggle was a desperate and confused one, and when night fell victory did not seem to have declared itself, and Charles was prepared to renew the battle the next morning; but the Moors had suffered more heavily than he knew, and in the night they retreated, leaving the battlefield and victory to their Christian opponent. It was a severe check, and it was followed by others only less severe. Town after town was wrested from their hands; little by little the whole of the South of France came once more into the possession of Christian rulers, and for the present the Pyrenees and the Bosphorus seemed limits impassable to the Mahomedans. In 741 Charles Martel died, leaving behind him two children, Carloman and Pippin, and his territories were divided between them. The unity of Frankland was thus threatened, but not for long; Carloman determined to abandon his power, and retire for his soul's health into a monastery, and thus from 747 onwards, Pippin reigned alone.

Consequence of the battle of Tours.

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Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; Margoliouth's *Life of Mohamet* and *Mahomedanism*. *The Speeches and Table Talk of Mohammad*, by Stanley Lane-Poole (with valuable introduction). For St. Benedict and St. Gregory, the *Ecclesiastical Histories* of Milman and Robertson. St. Benedict's *Rule* is in Henderson's *Documents of the Middle Ages*. For the Franks, see Gibbon and Hodgkin.

## CHAPTER V

## Charlemagne and the New Empire

THE great development that was in store for the power of the Franks, and the change of the title of their ruler from mayor to king and then from king to emperor, depend upon the relation between the Franks and the papacy, and the mutual services which each rendered to the other. We must look, therefore, first to Italy, and understand the position of the papacy there.

The spiritual authority of the papacy was rising continually higher; the monasteries and the missionaries everywhere asserted the authority of the Pope as supreme within the Church; but in Rome and in Italy the position was full of great difficulties and dangers. The turbulence of the city and the rivalry of the nobles threatened the authority of the Pope within the walls of Rome; and outside of Rome he was continually in conflict with the power of the Lombards. The Lombards were not organized into a single monarchy: the duchies of the South, Spoleto and Benevento, were in practical independence. But the Lombard power had made of late rapid advances. Liutprand, the Lombard king, was a ruler of real power. Nearly all traces of the power of the Eastern Empire were swept away in the north of Italy, and even Ravenna itself was hard pressed. Liutprand forced his authority even upon those territories which the Pope had been accustomed to rule as representative of the emperors, and the bitter hostility which was expressed by the Pope against the Lombards sprang from a rivalry in power and not from difference of faith. The Lombards were indeed by this time Christians of the orthodox Catholic type, and yet the Popes poured upon them the most bitter invectives; they declared that they were "lepers"; that they were "a race cast out from the family of nations," and they doomed them with confidence to everlasting punishment.

The Church in Italy in the eighth century.

Liutprand.

If the papacy was to be safe from Lombard dominion, and if it was to enjoy independent rule over any part of Italy, it would need to find outside assistance, and yet this assistance could hardly come from the Eastern Empire. It is true, as we have already seen, that the ruler of Constantinople, the Emperor Leo, was a good soldier, and had waged a vigorous and successful campaign against the Mahomedans, but a theological quarrel prevented the Popes from seeking assistance at Constantinople. There had broken out a strange movement, known as Iconoclasm, which bears in many ways a striking resemblance to the Protestant movement of eight centuries later; it was partly a reaction from the superstition and asceticism of the Church in the East, and perhaps it was partly due to the influence and the success of Mahomedanism. Those who accepted this new movement rejected the worship of the sacred images, or Icons, which played so large a part in the ceremonies of the Eastern Church; they refused to worship the Virgin Mary, and they demanded the marriage of priests. The enthusiasm of the new movement increased the vigour of the Eastern Empire, but it conflicted directly with all that was insisted upon most eagerly at Rome. The Emperor Leo himself adopted the new ideas, but they were condemned in 732 by a council at Rome, and the emperor with all those who supported them was solemnly excommunicated. Leo died in 741 and was succeeded by a Constantine, but the movement of Iconoclasm only grew stronger under the new ruler, and the breach with Rome grew in consequence wider. In 785 the Empress Irene mounted the throne by means of murder; she was orthodox, and restored the worship of the sacred Icons. But the relations between Constantinople and the papacy continued very much strained, and the Pope would not willingly look for help to a dynasty which in his eyes was stained by heresy, by vice, and by crime.

The  
papacy and  
the Eastern  
Empire.  
Iconoclasm.

The  
Empress  
Irene and  
the end of  
Iconoclasm.

But while relations with the East were thus strained the Popes had never hesitated to admit their great indebtedness to the mayors of the Franks, and it was to the mayors of the

Franks therefore that they appealed for rescue from the intolerable pressure which the Lombards were putting upon them. Pippin ruled for some ten years as mayor, though during a part of this time the throne of the Franks was vacant. Then, however, a new king was crowned, by name Childerich III. ; but it was clear that this farce of monarchy must soon cease, and Pippin's power and authority were so great that it was only natural that he should claim the royal title for himself. He had unquestionably the power to take the crown, and yet the traditional sanctity of the monarchy was still so great that he hesitated as to the manner in which the step was to be taken. Here the Pope rendered him great assistance. The reigning Pope was Zacharias, a powerful ruler to whom the papal authority owed a great advance. When the question came from Frankland as to whether or no Pippin should be called king, the Pope answered without hesitation that he who had the power should also have the title, and the Pope's word was sufficient to remove all lingering scruples. The king was deposed and tonsured and sent into a monastery : Pippin was raised upon the shoulders of his nobles in the old Frankish manner at Soissons, and was anointed king by the English missionary St. Boniface. Then, two years later, the successor of Zacharias, Pope Stephen himself, came north of the Alps to the Court of Pippin and crowned him with his own hands ; henceforth his dynasty reigned without opposition. It is known by the rather strange name of the Carolingian dynasty, a name which is derived from his great son, Charles or Charlemagne, and owes its form to the Merovingian dynasty which had preceded it.

So the Pope had made Pippin king, and now Pippin had to render to the Pope a great service in return. He was appealed to for help against the "unspeakable" Lombards, and in 754 a Frankish army passed into Italy. The Lombard king, Aistulf, was defeated without difficulty, and surrendered to Pippin. The Lombard monarchy was not destroyed, but the king was compelled to restore to Pope Stephen a large portion of his

territory, those lands namely which lay between Ravenna and Rome, recently seized by the Lombards. This territory the Pope held not nominally as an independent power, but rather as the representative and dependent of the Frankish king. This was in 754; Pippin lived yet fourteen years and administered his dominions with success and extended their boundaries. He died in 768, and again, as upon the death of his own father, the unity of the Frankish monarchy was threatened. He left two children, Charles and Carloman, and his dominions were divided according to Frankish rule in about equal portions between these two. But Carloman, after two years of rule, died of disease, and Charles was left to rule in single and undisputed sovereignty. Thus in **Accession** 770 the reign of Charlemagne begins—for it is by **of Charle-** this name that he is best known to posterity, and **magne.**

by this name we will usually speak of him, though it is a name that was not applied to him until long after his death. His real name was Karl or Charles, and Charlemagne is a corruption of Carolus Magnus or Charles the Great, and is perhaps also due to some confusion with Carloman. He was himself of pure German descent: he lived for the most **A pure** part to the west of the Rhine, where he made **German.** his capital at Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), and he is a more thoroughly German ruler even than Charles Martel or Pippin; yet not only Germany, but also France looks back upon him as a great national figure, and sees in his reign and policy the beginning of a great epoch in their history.

There is no more important reign than his in the Middle Ages. He extended the dominions of the Franks far into Germany, and even may be said to have created **The life-** the mediæval German state. He carried the **work of** armies of the Franks victoriously into Italy and **Charle-** into Spain, and in both countries left behind him **magne.** an enduring influence. His reign, too, saw a new movement in literature and culture, whereby, if only for a moment, the darkness of the early Middle Ages was broken and an impulse given which never entirely died away. Lastly, his power in western Europe became so great and so unrivalled, his services to the Church were so important, that in order to mark his



position the title of emperor was bestowed on him, and this assumption of the old title proved to be a more important thing even than it seemed at the time. In nearly every direction a new epoch begins with his career. The constructive forces of the Middle Ages are combined in him; the long disintegration of the old Roman power is at an end; the building up of many features of the mediæval modern world may be traced directly to him.

We have, from his secretary, Eginhard, an account of the man and his work. He was tall, strong, and agile, delighting in the athletic exercises of the Germans; an unwearied rider, a great hunter; fond of swimming in the baths of his capital. He was, for the time, temperate in eating and in drinking, and did much to raise the standard of manners among the rude German nobles. His interest in culture was great, and he induced the great scholar, Alcuin of York, to come over from England and found schools for the training of the sons of the Frankish nobles. He was himself proficient in languages, and had even some knowledge of Greek; he was specially devoted to Augustine's great work *The City of God*; but it is a strange and, for the age, a characteristic detail that with his considerable interest in culture, and his great intellectual power, he never succeeded in learning to write. His character shows us great magnanimity and a genuine piety and devotion to the State; a higher standard of personal morality than was to be found as a rule among the nobles of his day; though his private life was in many respects irregular, and his record as a ruler is stained by more than one act of cruelty.

He ranks in history as a great conqueror, though probably not as a great soldier. His campaigns were often delegated to others, and his own contribution to them was that of director and organizer. We will enumerate his chief conquests without regard to chronology. First, he fought against and thoroughly subdued the duchy of Aquitaine, which had hitherto been in loose dependence upon the Frankish monarchy. Next we see him attacking with success the Mahomedan power in the north of Spain. The Moors were troubled

The personality of Charlemagne.

The conquests of Charlemagne.

the duchy

Aquitaine.

with fierce dissensions and civil wars, and it was these which gave Charles his opportunity. He crossed the Pyrenees more than once. In 797 he took Barcelona and organized a strip of territory on the south side of the Pyrenees as the Spanish march. The work was permanent, but it was not accomplished without difficulty, and the death of one of his officers, Roland, as he was repassing the Pyrenees has become one of the most famous incidents in epic legend. It was of permanent importance that Christianity won a victory in Spain. From this point onward it developed gradually but unceasingly until many centuries later Spain became Christian once more. Still more important were the wars waged by Charles in Saxony. The Conquest of Saxony of his time was very different from that which appears on the maps of Europe to-day; it included the lower valleys of the Ems, the Weser and the Elbe, and was a wide tract of heath and of marsh covered by forests and hardly penetrated by roads; the inhabitants were fierce heathens who clung to their old faith with much greater tenacity than the Goths and the Franks had done, and made a stubborn resistance to the Christian missionaries and the military forces by which they were supported. Charles fought against them in a long series of campaigns, which were marked by at least one serious disaster to his forces, for in 782 an army of his was unexpectedly attacked and destroyed. But the Saxons were unable to maintain their independence. The crucial point came when the Saxon leader, Widukind, surrendered and accepted baptism; a subsequent insurrection of his followers was punished by the cold-blooded execution of over four thousand of them. The conquered land was held down by the transplantation of the population and the building of monasteries. The work had been done by harsh and cruel means, but it proved permanent. The Christian Faith and the Frankish dominion struck firm root, and we shall see how subsequently it was the Saxon people which took up and carried on the imperial work of Charlemagne when his own descendants no longer availed to do it.

Other campaigns were directed against Bavaria which was now definitely annexed to the Frankish monarchy, and became

henceforward one of the most progressive parts of German territory. Nor was Charlemagne satisfied to rule over all **Bavaria,** Germany, but he passed the Elbe and struck **the Slavs,** down many of the Slavonic peoples beyond that **Bohemia.** river, and penetrated into Bohemia and subjugated the Czechs. Further, he fought in a notable series of **The Avars.** campaigns against the Avars who were resident in what we now call Austria and Hungary. They were a powerful people, and were believed to hold within their vast fortifications an enormous treasure, which they had inherited from Atila the Hun, and they were still a danger to the more cultured peoples of Germany. Their fortifications were forced in a series of attacks; the great treasure was taken, and brought into circulation; their ruler was forced, after his defeat, to accept Christian baptism.

And now, quite out of order, we come to his conquest of the Lombards, and we place it here because it leads us up to the great and important change in the title of **Charle-** Charles. The victories of Pippin had not settled **magne** the relations between Pope and Lombards, and **and the** Charles himself had a quarrel with their king, **Lombards.** Desiderius, whose sister he had married and subsequently repudiated. In 773, upon an appeal from Pope Hadrian, Charles marched into Lombardy, and legend for long retained the memory of the invincible iron-clad host which poured into the north Italian plain. The Lombard king was blockaded in Pavia and forced to surrender; his territories were now definitely annexed to those of Charles, who, in 774, took to himself the title of "King of the Franks and Lombards, and Patrician of the Romans." He increased at the same time the territories and power of the Pope, and for a quarter of a century was satisfied with the title that he had thus assumed.

His next great step came, not from any quarrel between Pope and Lombards, but from the bitter strife between the **Charle-** Pope and the nobles of Rome. Between the relations **magne** of the last Pope, Hadrian, and the new Pope, **becomes** Leo III., there was bitter antagonism, and Leo **emperor.** was attacked by his enemies and half blinded by them just outside the city of Rome. He was imprisoned

but escaped, and in 797 fled beyond the Alps to Charles at Paderborn, and there implored him to come to the help of the Vicar of Christ, who had been thus grievously insulted and maltreated by his enemies. In the year 800 Charles marched again to Italy and to Rome; there was no resistance of any kind; Leo the Pope appeared before him in Rome, defended himself against the charges that his enemies brought against him, was declared innocent, and solemnly restored to his papal authority. Once more the Pope owed a great debt to the Frankish ruler, and now, as in the case of Pippin, he repaid that debt by facilitating the adoption of a higher title.

On Christmas Day of the year 800, Charlemagne attended High Mass in the old church of St. Peters at Rome, and after the ceremony the Pope rose, and walking across Christmas to him placed the crown upon his head and Day, 800. saluted him by the title of "Emperor." There is something a little mysterious about the occurrence, and there was something in the manner of it which Charlemagne himself did not like, for he said afterwards that if he had known what was going to take place he would not have gone into the church. But it cannot be doubted that the title was one which Charlemagne had already determined to take, and the Pope only did in fact what had been previously agreed upon. Henceforth, with short intervals, until the year 1806 there was again a Roman emperor in Western Europe.

At first the change must have seemed a very small one. The Imperial title added no new subject and no atom of fresh power to the monarchy which Charlemagne already possessed. It must have seemed at first little more than a title of honour, and yet as we look back upon it we see that it was no mere ceremony but an incident of first rate importance in the history of Europe. The successors of Charlemagne in the title regarded it as something far more than an empty distinction, and however small their actual power, they thought that it gave them a rightful claim to supremacy in Western Europe. The Middle Ages, as we know them, could not have pursued the course they did had it not been for the revival of the

Importance  
of the  
Imperial  
title.

Imperial title by Charlemagne. It is of course in no true sense a continuation of the old Roman Empire ; there is little in common between the powerful German king who now called himself emperor, and the old rulers of Rome from Augustus to Constantine, who spoke Latin, administered Roman law and regarded the Germans as their most dangerous enemies. But those who came after Charlemagne regarded themselves as successors of Julius Cæsar and of Constantine as much as of Charles himself, and their belief was one that influenced their actions and the course of history.

Charlemagne showed himself a great ruler, not so much in the winning of his vast empire, as in the ruling of it. It was obviously difficult to hold together so enormous **The states-** a territory and one so recently won ; there was a **manship of** perpetual danger that local rulers and local feeling **Charle-** would assert themselves against the central **magne.** authorities. In order to counteract this, he invented the system of Imperial agents (*Missi Domini*). These were men appointed by himself, who constantly travelled through the empire carrying the orders of their master, and seeing that those orders were performed. Twice a year the armed force of the empire was called together ; once in autumn and again in the following spring in the famous Mayfield (such was the title of these national assemblies). The appearance of the common soldiers gave to these assemblies a popular and even a democratic appearance ; but the deliberations were conducted by the magnates and great ecclesiastics. The welfare of the people at large was probably better cared for by the emperor himself than by this assemblage of notables. He did his utmost to diminish the power of the old national dukes, and the empire was governed largely by means of his counts, who were in his time not the great hereditary rulers that they afterwards became, but were the nominees of the emperor and ruled only while they retained his confidence. The name **Feudalism.** of Charlemagne is sometimes associated with the beginnings of feudalism ; but in truth he did his utmost to prevent the growth of feudalism, for feudalism implies, above all things, the almost independent authority of the local landowner, and it was Charles' effort to assert

everywhere the authority of the central government. We possess a large number of the laws or capitularies of Charlemagne, and in them we see his anxiety to promote learning, to preserve books, to maintain order and good government throughout the length and breadth of his empire. Since the fall of Rome, Western Europe had seen nothing like it: the vast extent of territory, the good order that was maintained, the high ideals which, on the whole, guided his policy, his effort to plant or develop learning and culture amid the population; all these make of his rule a bright period in the darkest section of the Middle Ages.

He died in 814. His work, as we shall see, was soon ruined by his successors; but in the confusion that followed, his own name and the memory of his deeds only grew greater in men's memories. Hardly was he dead before legend began to gather round his name, and all through the Middle Ages a large number of epics were written, in which the historical features of the great king were almost forgotten, and he became a mythical hero, going on the Crusades, fighting against the Moors, and even defending the city of Paris against them. Wide as all this is from the true work that he accomplished, it is nevertheless a tribute to the abiding reputation of the great Charles and the impression he produced upon the contemporaries.

Charlemagne's reign and period can be studied in English in Gibbon, in the last volumes of Dr. Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders*, in Dr. Hodgkin's small *Life of Charlemagne* and in *Charlemagne*, by H. W. C. Davis (*Heroes of the Nations*). Grant's *Early Lives of Charlemagne* consists of translations of the Lives by Eginhard and the Monk of Saint Gall. For Charlemagne's relations with the East, see Finlay's *Byzantine Empire*.

For German history, which now begins to form a main part of European History, the books in English are few. Henderson's *History of Germany* and his *Germany in the Middle Ages* are useful summaries. Müller's *Deutsche Geschichte* provides a valuable outline in German, and Lamprecht's *Geschichte Deutschlands* may be consulted throughout. It may be well, too, to mention Freytag's series of historical romances, dealing with the history of Germany, called *Die Ahnen*; and his historical sketches entitled *Bilder aus der Deutschen Vergangenheit*.

## CHAPTER VI

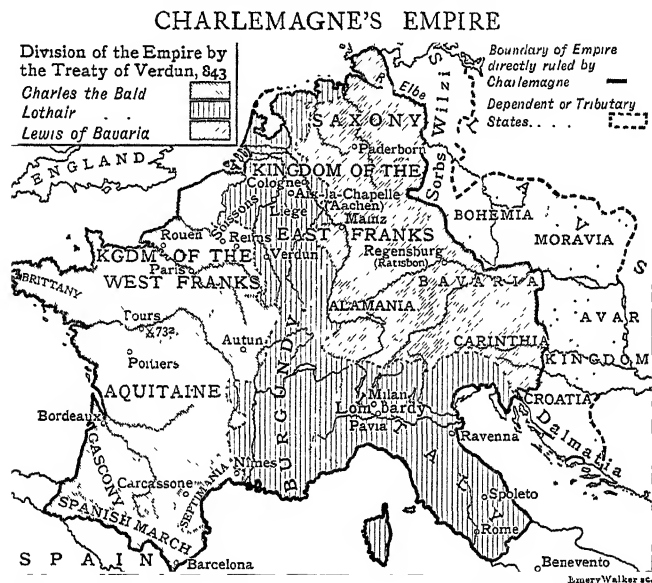
## The Disruption of the Empire of Charlemagne

THE empire of Charlemagne was one which it required a man with the greatest energy and ability to manage, but after his death none such was forthcoming. He was succeeded by his only legitimate son, who is known as Lewis the Pious, a man too subservient to the clergy and the Church, and generally deficient in energy and will-power, who soon allowed his dominions to fall into disorder. There was recurrent civil war, and though the unity of the empire was not broken during his reign, it is clear that its organization was much weakened, and on his death, division quickly followed. He left behind him three sons: Lothair, Lewis, and Charles, and according to the Frankish custom his territories were divided among these three, though only one could hold the Imperial title. There was bitter strife as to the line of the division, and in 843 this was temporarily settled by the Treaty of Verdun. By this treaty Lothair, who had succeeded to the Imperial title, held the central portion of the empire, the lands namely, that stretched along the banks of the Rhine, the whole of what we should now call Switzerland and the north of Italy; a small portion of this still retains as Lorraine, the memory of his name. Lewis ruled over the lands that lay to the east of this, and Charles over all that lay to the west. The Treaty was no permanent settlement, but it has always attracted attention because it foreshadows so much of the history of the future. We may see here for the first time the existence of Germany and of France, and the lands that lay between them and fell to the lot of Lothair have been fiercely disputed between these two powers almost ever since that time.

The disruption of the territory of Charlemagne was no accidental thing due to the rivalries of his three grandchildren; there were permanent forces at work which would

## The Disruption of the Empire of Charlemagne 241

have made the maintenance of the empire even by a second Charlemagne, a matter of great difficulty. We may note, in the first place, that the territories themselves were so vast, and varied so much in character and needs, that the maintenance of a single authority—especially in a time when communication was difficult and slow—would have been a matter of the greatest



Charlemagne's Empire and the Division at the Treaty of Verdun.

possible difficulty under any circumstances; and, secondly, immediately after the death of Charles, there broke upon the empire another series of barbarian invasions, almost as dangerous and destructive as those which the German invaders themselves had carried out against the old Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries. The Moors, though they had been checked by the Franks at the battle of Tours, were nevertheless still dangerous enemies, and south Italy, especially, suffered terribly at their hands. In the year 846 St. Peter's Church in Rome itself



was occupied by them. They were driven off, but for a long time remained to plague and harass the centre of Italy. Upon the east the Magyars (the ancestors of the modern Hungarians), who had succeeded the Avars in what we call Hungary and Austria, were constantly striking into the more settled districts of Germany and of Italy, and carried everywhere with them ruin and devastation. Even more important than these were the invasions of the Northmen, whom we usually call the Normans or Danes. Driven from their homes in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and the Baltic coasts generally, by a spirit of adventure and perhaps by the growing strength of their own governments, these adventurers, who were often known as the Vikings, or men of the Fiords, passed out in daring raids towards the lands of the West. Both in their immediate and remote consequences these raids are of great importance for European history. The beginnings of Russia may be traced to the voyage of Rurik the Northman, who penetrated into the country in 862. We know how immensely the history of our own island was changed by its conquest at the hands of the descendants of these sea-rovers in the eleventh century. Before that date they had planted stable governments in Normandy on either side of the river Seine, and also in Naples and in Sicily; they had already carried their conquering raids as far as Iceland, and there is now little doubt that from Iceland they made their way to the northern coasts of America, centuries before Columbus set out on his more famous expedition. It is not, however, of these remote consequences that we must now think. In their early raids they had no desire to found a permanent state, but they came to plunder and to slay. They sailed with their vessels up the chief rivers and landed to plunder: the coasts of England, of France, and to a lesser extent, of Germany, suffered unspeakable things at their hands. Thus in 841 they captured Rouen; in 847 they took Bordeaux, and from that time forward never ceased to harass the coasts of France. Their most destructive raid upon the German lands came in 881, when they penetrated up the Rhine and destroyed Liège, Cologne, Aix-la-Chapelle, and

Attacks of  
the North-  
men on the  
empire.

many other important towns, but ten years later (891) they were heavily defeated by a German army under Arnulf, and this defeat served to turn them away from Germany and perhaps to intensify their attacks upon France. When we remember that Charles' empire had been built up by a series of victorious military expeditions conducted by himself and his predecessors, we shall see that the failure of his followers to maintain the defence of the land against these barbarous invaders must necessarily have shaken the very existence of the Imperial power. The disruption of the empire and the constant subdivision of it into smaller and smaller units rapidly followed. For, in the first place, the three large divisions, that we have already seen established by the peace of Verdun, were soon broken into a number of others. Thus the kingdom of Arles was set up on the river Rhone. South of the Alps was established the kingdom of Italy, whilst a little further north came the kingdom of Burgundy. But more important than this establishment of separate kingdoms was the process whereby was established that system of society and government which is known as Feudalism. The origins of this system are to be traced far back into the past, and some of its features will be explained when we have reached the period in which they were more fully developed. It is enough here to say that under feudalism, the government and the whole social system were intimately connected with the ownership of land. The owner of land was not merely possessor of property but became a ruler and a judge, a commander of troops, even a collector of taxes. Upon his own estates he was supreme: and though he recognized as superior to him the king of the land, and the emperor, and though he would be bound to yield to them in certain judicial matters, and to render them service in time of war, he would not permit any interference with his own tenants or with his own lands. This system varied much from place to place and from time to time. It began to show itself in its chief features at the time of the break up of the Carolingian empire, and it seems clearly to be due in the main, not to any theory of government or law, but to the needs of the moment. The barbarian invasions were dangerous; from the weak

central government no help was to be expected, and thus society organized itself for defence round the strongest force that was to be found, and that force was usually the landlord in his fortified castle. The system once adopted spread very rapidly and if feudalism was, to begin with, a consequence of the disruption of the old empire, it soon became a cause making for ever greater and greater subdivision. -

From 843 for some time the empire remained in the Carolingian house, but the Imperial power sank lower and lower, and the title was tossed about from one successor of Charles to the other. Until 888 some legitimate successor was always to be found. In that year the Imperial title passed to an illegitimate branch, the Arnulfings, and even there it did not persist for long; at the beginning of the tenth century the house of the great Charles had died out, and we shall find that his Imperial title and his Imperial mission were taken over by those Saxons against whom he had fought so many desperate campaigns.

The Church was to be one of the great forces moulding European society in the future as it had been in the past; but at the close of the ninth century it was faced with many grave troubles. There was in the first place the relation of Rome to the Eastern Church. We have already seen that there had been differences between them and that these differences had contributed to the recognition of Charlemagne as emperor. In addition to the theological differences which perhaps would not have led in themselves to schism, there was doubtless real and serious rivalry between the authorities of Rome and Constantinople. In 866, a synod was held at Constantinople and there certain decisions were taken which proved to be the occasion of a serious breach between the two Churches. The synod of Constantinople protested against the celibacy of the clergy, which it declared to be a snare of Satan; it protested against the formula of the Western creed, which spoke of the Holy Ghost as "proceeding from the Father and the Son"; it desired to omit the words "and the Son" altogether, declaring that they amounted to a heresy

“so awful as to deserve a thousand anathemas”; it declared also its determination to celebrate Easter on a day 866. different from that of the Western Church. There were constant efforts from time to time to heal the breach which was thus created, and sometimes these efforts seemed likely to succeed, but in the end they proved fruitless, and the Churches have remained separate until the present day.

The Pope was also harassed by the turbulence of the populace of the city of Rome itself and of Italy. We have seen how the Saracens invaded Italy, how the nobles of Rome were claiming an authority over the Popes, and how their different factions often managed to convert the papacy into their tool. Scandals were constantly occurring in the life of the Popes and of their courts, and, as so often happened, nowhere did the papacy seem weaker than in the city of Rome itself. Yet despite the breach with the Eastern Church, and despite these difficulties at home, the Popes were at this time putting forward greater claims than ever to temporal sovereignty and to authority within the Church. It is at this time that certain documents appeared which are generally known by the name of the Isidorian Decretals. They appeared in Rome about the year 860, and they purported to be early utterances of Popes or of Councils, all tending to establish the same conclusions, namely, the independence of the Church and the sanctity of its possessions, the power of the bishops, the supreme authority and dignity of the Popes and their freedom from secular control. It is now universally recognized that the majority of these documents were false, and it shows how little the age knew of history that they could, even for a moment, be accepted as genuine. An even more important forgery of this period is the so-called “Donation of Constantine.” This strange document begins by telling how “Cæsar Flavius Constantine, faithful, merciful, supreme, beneficent, Alamannic Gothic, Sarmatic, Germanic, Britannic, Hunic, pious, fortunate, victor and triumpher, always august,” was healed of leprosy by the personal action of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, when the Pagan priests had told him that he could only be

Quarrel of  
Eastern  
and  
Western  
Churches.

The  
Isidorian  
Decretals.  
The Dona-  
tion of Con-  
stantine.

cured by bathing in the blood of children ; and how in gratitude for his recovery he had decreed that " he who for the time being shall be pontiff of the holy Roman Church shall be chief over all the priests of the whole world," and that " Sylvester, the universal Pope," shall possess " our palace, as also the City of Rome and all the provinces, districts, and cities of Italy or of the western regions," and that this shall " remain uninjured and unshaken until the end of the world." It was on this document that the temporal claims of the papacy were often based in the future, and until the revival of learning in the fifteenth century, there was no one, even among those who most deplored the consequences of the document, who ventured to dispute its authenticity.

We may complete our survey of Europe in the ninth century by noting that the Mahomedan world was not more united than the Christian world at this time. The Mahomedan World. Mahomedan kingdoms fall mainly into three groups : the Khalifate of Bagdad, the Khalifate of Cairo and the Emirate of Cordova. Great things were being done by the Mahomedans and great contributions made by them to the maintenance and progress of civilization in Spain, where the Moors at their best gave an example of religious toleration that the Christian states might have followed with great profit. They devoted themselves to the pursuit of knowledge, and mathematics, astronomy, and chemistry trace gratefully to them important steps in their origin or growth. But already there were signs of disruptive tendencies within the Mahomedan world ; something like the feudalism of Western Europe was observable there also, and in addition, their states were shaken by constant struggles for the succession, by the fanaticism of religious sects, and by the insubordination of their armies. For the moment the danger from Mahomedanism seemed passing, but we shall see how there came a revival of the Faith and the energies of Islam, and how two centuries later Christianity had again to put forward all her forces to resist its great enemy.

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German and ecclesiastical histories as in the last chapter. The Donation of Constantine is printed in Henderson's *Documents of the Middle Ages*. Scheffel's *Ekkehard* gives an interesting picture of the ravages of the Magyars.

## CHAPTER VII

## The Saxon Kings of Germany and the Establishment of the Holy Roman Empire

AT the beginning of the tenth century little of the work of the great Charles remained intact. His empire had been broken up into several kingdoms, and a number of duchies and other powers, which were in effect independent. The culture and education which had been planted under his auspices had almost died out; the barbarian invasions were increasing in intensity; the situation in Europe seemed very much what it had been in the fourth and fifth centuries, but the civilized and organized states had little of the strength and self-consciousness which had been possessed by the Roman Empire.

But the work of Charlemagne had not really been swept away, and the next upward move towards order and civilization owed much to his memory and example. It is strange that he found his real successors, not in those of his own blood, nor in Germans of the old Frankish stock, but among those Saxons who had been his fiercest enemies, and whose overthrow had been the most difficult task of his life.

Germany at this time was bounded upon the east by the river Elbe, for beyond that came various Slavonic races wholly alien from the Germans. The country was divided into six great duchies, each representing a certain amount of national feeling; they are often called from their German name the Stem-duchies. They were Saxony, Franconia, Thuringia, Swabia, Bavaria, and Lorraine. Each of these was a practically independent unit, and though they had recognized some king of Germany ever since the Treaty of Verdun, they had allowed as a matter of fact little interference with their own affairs. Now in 918 the throne of Germany was vacant, and there was no obvious candidate. The idea of hereditary succession had made much

The beginning of the tenth century.

The national Duchies of Germany.

progress of late, but it was not yet applied to the kingship of Germany, nor, on the other hand, was any other method of appointment recognized. In 919 at Fritzlar at an assembly of the Saxon and Franconian peoples, **Henry the Fowler**, 919. Henry of Saxony, better known as Henry the Fowler, was chosen as king, and his title was soon afterwards recognized by the other dukes.

There was nothing to show that this election was to mark an important epoch in the history of Germany. Yet so it was ; **The work of Henry the Fowler.** an able man and a powerful and vigorous race had gained possession of the royal title, and from this time onwards for more than three centuries the unity and prosperity and strength of Germany made rapid progress. Henry's own reign is not in itself of the first importance, but it forms an important introduction to that of his son and successor. His chief energies were devoted to the defence of the country. The Normans were no longer dangerous, but the non-German peoples beyond the Elbe were pressing in upon the native population. Henry opened a road for German colonization across the Elbe, and in a series of wars defeated the Abotrites, the Wiltzes, and other Slavonic races, and thus took up once more the task of Charlemagne himself. He conquered the territory which was later on to be known as Brandenburg, and from which in far distant centuries was to come another series of rulers who would give to Germany greater unity and power than were given even by his own powerful house.<sup>1</sup> He occupied the southern portion of Denmark and Christianized it. But his **The Magyars.** chief difficulty was with the Magyars, who now occupied the lands on the Middle Danube, and in wild undisciplined bands were working great havoc in the south of Germany, and often spreading their devastations far into the centre. Henry endeavoured to cope with them by two means : first, he built upon their usual line of attack a number of strongly fortified towns of which Quedlinburg, Merseburg, and Goslar were the chief, and he organized also a large body

<sup>1</sup> The allusion is, of course, to the Hohenzollern family whose representatives became in turn Electors of Brandenburg (1415); Kings of Prussia (1700); and Emperors of Germany (1871).

of cavalry to pursue the rapidly moving forces of the enemy. In 933 his long preparations proved their efficiency, for the Magyars were beaten in a great battle on the river Unstrut. In the government of Germany his chief effort was to win the allegiance of the other dukes; he treated them almost as independent powers, and Germany was more like a federation of duchies than a central monarchy. He had thus done a great and a permanent work before his death in 936.

**Battle on  
the River  
Unstrut,  
933.**

He was succeeded by his son Otto I. (Otto the Great) who carried on his father's work, defended and organized Germany, increased the strength of the monarchy, and then, like another Charlemagne, placed upon his head the Imperial crown. He pushed further beyond the Elbe, colonizing and conquering bodies of Germans; the bishopric of Magdeburg was founded by him, and it was important not only as a great religious centre for the newly won lands, but also because it commanded the chief passage across the river Elbe. On many of the frontiers of his kingdom he organized new forms of government which in the west were known as Palatinates, and in the north and east went as a rule under the name of Marks; thus in the east he founded the North Mark and the East Mark, in the south he founded the Bavarian East Mark, which was later on to gain great importance under the title of Austria, in the north of Italy he founded the Mark of Verona, and in all these frontier governments the rulers were given greater and more independent powers than they would have been allowed in the central and more settled portion of Germany. For him, as for his father, the Magyars were the great enemy, and against them he used the same methods of defence that his father had used. When in 955 they pushed up the Danube, as they had so often done before, he met them at Lechfeld, not far from Augsburg, and inflicted upon them a defeat so crushing and decisive that it may be said to mark the end of their danger to central Europe. They ceased henceforth from their raids, they settled into a permanent state in the lands which they had occupied on the Middle

**Battle of  
Lechfeld:  
end of the  
Magyar  
danger.**



Danube, and formed ultimately the important kingdom of Hungary.

Otto had more difficulty than Henry had had in his relations to the great dukes ; he managed indeed to secure their territories for his relations or to marry them to princesses of his house ; but, as has so often happened, such ties proved insufficient to maintain their loyalty. He had to fight against them on more than one occasion, for whilst they regarded themselves as independent rulers, the king wished to make of them merely hereditary officials of the empire. He succeeded in beating down their revolts, but their ambitions remained, and throughout the whole of the history of mediæval Germany, the contest between the kings and the great nobles is a feature that is rarely absent. The personal ambitions of the great nobles made Henry look to the ecclesiastics of Germany for his chief agents. They were the best educated, and, indeed, the German the only educated class in Germany ; the celibacy clergy.

of the clergy made it impossible for them to found families or to share in the feudal ambitions of the nobles ; and the weakness of the papacy made it in effect possible for the king to appoint whom he liked as bishops and church dignitaries. More and more then as his reign advanced he placed the actual administration of Germany in the hands of his great ecclesiastics, and the bishops of Germany were busied henceforth not merely with the religious duties which belonged to them, but also with the collection of taxes, trials at law, the organization of armies, and the general work of administration. This close union between the German kingdom and the Church made the king particularly interested in the fortunes of the papacy in Italy, and it is to this land that we must now turn.

Its condition was deplorable. There needed, indeed, only peace, and the maintenance of order for Italy rapidly to develop into one of the most advanced and of Italy. prosperous districts of Europe ; but peace and order were just what were wanting to Italy and what the country was destined to lack yet for many a long century. In the north there was indeed a king of Italy, an inheritor of the power of Charles the Great to the south of the Alps, but he was far from ruling over the whole land. The

north of Italy was constantly devastated by the invasions of the Magyars, the centre of Italy for a long time was the helpless prey of Mahomedan invaders, and for some thirty years at the beginning of the century was held by Moors and Saracens. Nor was the condition of the south any better. There were still a few strong places in the hands of the eastern empire, but the land was harried by the raids of Mahomedan pirates, and unity, order and strength were quite absent. In the past the divisions of Italy had often been to some extent compensated for by the strength, and the public spirit of the Popes, but at the beginning of the tenth century the papacy suffered as much as any other part of Italy from disorder, and had certain evil features peculiar to itself. It is indeed the darkest period in the whole history of the papacy. The city of Rome was the constant scene of ferocious disputes between rival factions who regarded the papacy as their prey. The Popes seemed in danger of forgetting their spiritual duties and thinking only of the power which their office brought them. Characteristic figures of the time are Marozia, a Roman lady, who controlled the papacy for some time, and Pope John XII., who became Pope at the age of nineteen and united with it the government of the city.

(Now all this was a matter of deep concern to Otto, the German. Relying as he did upon the churchmen in his own land, he could not desire to see the character of the Church sink at its centre, nor could he wish to see the rule of the Church come into the possession of any one who was strong and hostile to Germany. On the other hand, if he could himself secure a paramount influence at Rome he would be in a stronger position than ever with regard to the ecclesiastics of his own land; he had recently had experience of the unwillingness of the chief of them, the Archbishop of Mainz, to serve submissively his royal will. Hence came those interferences of the German king in Italy which lead up to some of the most striking scenes in mediæval history.) But Otto's first visit to Italy had nothing directly to do with the papacy. The last king of Italy, Lothair, had left a widow, Adelaide, and the successor

The condition of the Papacy.

Otto's interference in Italy. *made by Pope*

of Lothair (Berengar) claimed her hand for his son. From this unwelcome union she appealed to Otto, and he readily used this as an excuse for invasion. He came and without difficulty mastered Italy: he did not depose King Berengar but allowed him to remain as a vassal, while Otto himself was **Otto King** crowned king of Italy at Pavia, and married of Italy. the widow Adelaide. From this time he was clearly the strongest power in Italy as well as in Germany. He was, moreover, now a close neighbour of the papacy, and took a more direct interest than ever in the affairs of the city of Rome.

In 962 there came a sufficient excuse for his interference there. John XII., who sat upon the papal throne, **Troubles** was at daggers drawn with Berengar, and was also of Pope struggling against the various factions of the city. **John XII.** He himself was charged with various crimes and vices, but he appealed to Otto to help him against his enemies, and Otto came. He occupied Rome without difficulty, secured the Pope against his enemies of every kind, and restored him to the papal throne. Compare the position of Otto the German with that of Charles the Frank in 800. Both were the greatest rulers of their time, both had fought with success against the heathen enemies of Europe, and Otto's greatest victory at Lechfeld may be compared to the battle of Tours which was won against the Saracens by Charles' grandfather, Charles Martel. Both had rendered great services to the advance and the consolidation of the Church, and now Otto was to receive at the hands of the Pope the same reward which Charles had received 162 years earlier. On **Otto** 2nd February 962, Otto was crowned as emperor, **crowned** and the fabric of the empire of Charles seemed **Emperor.** restored to Europe. But if the comparison between the positions of the two men is close, great also are the differences. The empire of Charles was far more cosmopolitan than that of Otto. Charles was indeed a German, but he ruled, as we have seen, over Frenchmen, Spaniards, Italians, and Burgundians; whereas Otto, until he undertook the invasion of Italy, was a purely German king, ruling over an almost exclusively German population. His assumption of the Imperial

title seems therefore less warranted than that of Charles, and it was destined to have disastrous results for his successors. Had they ruled in Germany alone, it is probable that the German monarchy might have grown into a vigorous and permanent state. It was their connection with Italy, and all the vast and indefinite ambitions that were inspired by the Imperial title which constantly drew them away from their immediate task and involved them in struggles with Italy and the papacy, in the course of which their work was compromised, the unity of Germany was broken up and the empire itself at last dissolved in all but name.

These dangers were many of them in the far distant future, but immediately after his coronation Otto found that he had many difficulties to face in Italy; the Pope proved disobedient to the wishes of the emperor, and through Otto's influence was deposed. Another Pope was appointed, and Otto exacted from the people of Rome an oath that they would never recognize any Pope to whose election the emperor had not consented. The oath was taken and broken, and Otto found that his attempt to rule in Rome and in Italy would involve him in constant disputes. He died in Germany in the year 973.

He was succeeded by his son Otto II., and he in turn by his son Otto III. Their reigns are not of great importance, but they saw the appearance of many of those dangers against which the empire was later to struggle so hard and in vain. During the reign of Otto II. the danger of the Italian connection was apparent. The Saracens invaded the south of Italy, and the emperor fought against them at first with success, and then with entire failure; and whilst he, a German king, was thus occupied with a task really foreign to his position, his own land had been invaded by the heathen barbarians from the East, and the country had suffered very severely. The reign of Otto III. shows us the influence of Italy still more paramount. The emperor was a strange creature: his mother was a princess from Constantinople, and it must have been from her that he derived many ideas of government that were wholly foreign to Germany. He had been much influenced also by Gerbert,

an ecclesiastic of the time who subsequently became Pope as Sylvester II., and from him and from his mother he derived the idea of making the empire a strong centralized government after the model of that which ruled in Constantinople, and something wholly different from the feudalized monarchy which prevailed and developed in Germany. He lived in Rome

The in a palace on the Aventine Hill, and there sur-  
dreams of rounded himself with the ceremonial and rigid  
Otto III. etiquette that had for centuries prevailed in the East. Yet he had no intention of weakening the German control of the papacy, and one of the first acts of his reign was to make his cousin Bruno Pope at the age of twenty-three. Bruno, who took the significant name of Gregory V, was the first German Pope and in conjunction with the young Emperor (he was only sixteen) planned great reforms in the management of the Church. His ascetic character, the proposed changes, and his German origin all offended the Roman populace, who expelled him and, under a leader Crescentius, tried to establish an independent power. Otto returned, attacked Rome, and hanged Crescentius. Had he lived longer his reign could not have been a success, but he died in 1002, at the age of twenty-two.

We may note before passing from him that on the eastern frontier of Germany there grew up during his reign two powerful states which were destined to come into frequent collision with Germany. On the river Oder and to the east **Poles and**  
**Magyars.** of that river there rose the kingdom of Poland, organized as an independent state partly through the help of the papacy; and further south the Magyars made an advance towards settlement by the acceptance of the Christian Faith. Thus Germany no longer was in touch with a vague body of barbarian peoples, but with two definite states which were destined to grow into great strength and importance. \

The German and ecclesiastical histories mentioned in the last chapter will be the best guides for this. Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire* is specially valuable for the whole of the Middle Ages. *A Short History of the Italian People* by Mrs. Trevelyan is of great value for all Italian history.

## CHAPTER VIII

### The Eve of the Great Struggle between the Popes and the Emperors

HITHERTO the empire and the papacy had rendered great services to one another, but soon the rupture was to come which was to bring confusion and suffering on both Germany and Italy, and which forms the chief thread which will conduct us through the central portion of the Middle Ages. It will be necessary to consider the general position in both countries before the great contest began.

We have seen the circumstances under which the King of Germany claimed the rule over a large portion of Italy and assumed the title of emperor. His action had not sprung merely from greed or ambition; and by establishing his influence at Rome the emperor had rendered valuable services to both the papacy and Germany. But the difficulties of the situation were there from the first, and became more apparent and insoluble as time went on, <sup>Contrast</sup> for Germany and Italy were countries of a widely <sup>between</sup> different past, and in the present of a widely dif- <sup>Italy and Germany.</sup> ferent social condition. Germany had only been for a very short time under the dominion of the Roman Empire, and preserved in her government and in her social institutions little or no trace of the influence of ancient Rome. Feudalism had rooted itself there, and had become the basis of the whole social and political structure. Italy, on the contrary, had been for ages the centre and the seat of the Roman dominion; her language and her institutions were derived from ancient Rome. Every part of the life of Italy still bore traces of the impression of the old Roman rule, and this was especially the case with the large number of cities, which, as we shall see, rapidly moved forward to power and advanced claims to an almost independent position. The institutions of feudalism were not unknown, but they had not nearly so great an influence

as belonged to them in Germany. Then again in Germany the rulers, whether kings or emperors, had co-operated easily and naturally with the organization of the Church in the country, whereas in Italy almost from the first, though they came to help and even to rescue the papacy, there was the greatest difficulty in establishing a friendly and useful relation with it. The Popes were not only heads of the Catholic Church, they were also temporal rulers in Italy, and both as temporal and ecclesiastical rulers they desired to be independent of the influence, or at least free from the coercion of the empire. This feature of the situation became clearer and more important as time went on, and every advance in the power and organization of the papacy made a conflict with the empire more inevitable. Lastly, we must note that the Italian peoples resented the rule of a German master. It is true indeed that in the eleventh century the sense of nationality had hardly begun to develop and that mediæval institutions were international to an extent that the modern world finds difficult to realize. But though there was no common Italian nationality, nor a German nationality either, still the Italian people resented the presence in their midst of conquering soldiers and rulers, who spoke a foreign tongue, represented alien institutions, and came from a distant country. Out from these and other elements of antagonism there gradually evolved that struggle between emperors and popes which forms the central movement in two centuries of European history, and which came on without the desire of either of the chief combatants.

After the death of Otto III. the German monarchy and the Holy Roman Empire was in the hands successively of Henry II., Conrad II., and Henry III. Their reigns in Germany were quiet; there was indeed constant friction with the great nobles whom they tried to keep in subordination, but it will not be necessary to give any details of this. It is more important to notice that the kingdom of Burgundy came into the possession of the empire in 1006, and that its rule was organized by the successors of Henry II. so as to give the emperors

**Acquisition  
of Bur-  
gundy,  
1006.**

control over the western passes of the Alps, and thus at all times to secure entry into Italy. But these reigns show us considerable trouble in Italy. Before the emperors there lay in Germany a plain and useful task, the maintenance of order, and the advancement of the unity of the state ; but they were constantly turned aside from their work to deal with the problems of Italy which they were really incapable of solving. If we follow their reigns we find them called upon again and again to interfere in the squabbles of the factions of the city of Rome, and leading armies to extend their sway among the jarring elements of southern Italy. But these movements are only a prelude to the greater contest that was soon to come, and may be dismissed without detailed notice.

In Italy itself, meanwhile, new political elements were rapidly coming to the front. We begin now to see clearly the rise of the Italian communes, the development, that is, of municipal life in Italy. The origin of this municipal government is difficult to trace, and it is even questionable whether it is directly connected with the city life which flourished so splendidly during the second and third centuries of the Christian era. If there is a connection, the towns of Italy had at any rate lost their former unity and closeness of organization and had to work their way through constant confusion and conflict to a new unity. But it is important here to mark that cities such as Milan, Bologna, Verona, Florence, Pisa, Genoa, and many others became factors in the Italian problem which could never again be neglected.

These communes, as the names given above will show, were to be found in their most vigorous form in the north. In the centre of Italy their growth was prevented by the jealousy and power of the papacy. The communal movement had begun in promising form in the south of Italy, especially in Naples, but here it was checked by the development of the new Norman power, at which we must now look. Even before the arrival of the Normans, southern Italy presented a strange mixture of races and a conflict of various powers. The Eastern Empire still held important places upon the coasts,



and armies commanded by men who spoke Greek came occasionally to the country; the Lombard duchies of Spoleto and Benevento were strong and ambitious; the Saracens held Sicily and harassed Italy with their raids and had settled there in considerable numbers. The bulk of the population belonged to the old Italian stock, and, having suffered under the hard rule of its various masters, was ready to join itself to any power which promised it security and peace. In 1016

**Their first appearance,** the Normans appeared in Italy for the first recorded time. By this time, as we know, they had settled 1016.

on either side of the lower Seine and had formed there the compact duchy of Normandy. But the spirit of adventure was still strong upon them. It would take them fifty years later to England; it drove them now in detached bands as pilgrims and adventurers through the Mediterranean towards Palestine and the East. The Normans who appeared in 1016 had been on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but they were as ready to fight as they were to worship, and they readily took a share in the contests of southern Italy. Their help was welcomed and their armies were at first victorious, though not permanently so. Neither victory nor defeat, however, made much difference; the wealth of the land and the opportunity for adventure had been reported in Normandy, and ever fresh bands came out to fight for others

**Robert Guiscard.** and for themselves. (About the middle of the century (1046) there came to Italy Robert Guiscard, son of the famous Tancred, and himself, next to William the Conqueror, the greatest name in the history of the Normans. For some time he led the life of an adventurer and almost of a robber, joining himself now to one and now to another of the warring elements in southern Italy. So threatening, however, did the Norman bands become that at last all parties were willing to join for their expulsion. The Lombards and Greeks were assisted in 1053 by the forces of Pope Leo IX., and it seemed that the Normans must be overwhelmed. They

**Battle of Civitate, 1053.** were saved partly by the sympathy of a section of the population, partly by the over-confidence of their enemies, and partly by their own courage and skill. In the battle of Civitate which followed, their

enemies were decisively beaten and the Pope shortly afterwards fell into their hands. But the result of the battle was a strange and unforeseen one. There was in the Normans a strong religious vein and a deep reverence for the papal power. Pope Leo found himself well treated by his captors, and the reverence which they felt for the Church which he represented allowed him soon to make with them terms of the most favourable kind. From this time onward until the thirteenth century, usually though not invariably, the Normans are to be reckoned as the allies of the papacy. In 1059 the Pope invested Robert Guiscard with the duchy of Apulia and Calabria, which he thus held as a feudal possession under the papacy. Sicily was at the same time promised to him if he could conquer it from the Saracens. This was done in a series of campaigns which began in 1062. The fighting force of the Mahomedans had in this part of the world sunk very low, and the Normans made themselves masters of the island without much difficulty. They succeeded in establishing there and in Italy a government of great strength and excellence. The country flourished under them as it had not flourished for centuries; architecture, science, and literature all owe much to them, and their government was of a much more strongly monarchical kind than was to be found elsewhere in Italy. The communal movement had little chance of developing itself under their power.

**Alliance  
of the  
Normans  
with the  
Papacy.**

**Conquest  
of Sicily.**

Further north another force must be noted, that of Tuscany, for here there grew up a feudal power that embraced a very wide territory and was for a time one of the most important factors in the balance of power in Italy. Boniface, the count of Tuscany, was a supporter of the emperor, and through the emperor he had received many great towns, such as Mantua, Ferrara, Brescia, and Modena. This great territory made him the most important force in central Italy. Upon his death his power came into the hands of his daughter, the famous Matilda of Tuscany. She was married to Godfrey of Lorraine, but they had no children, and they were devoted to the authority

of the Church and of the Pope. All the money and all the power that was represented by their great territories was at the disposal of the Popes when the hour of their conflict with the emperors arrived.

We must turn our attention now to the papacy itself. The establishment of the empire had done something to

improve the condition of things in Rome, but much remained to be done. The supreme authority of Rome was by no means recognized in northern Italy; and the bishops of Milan and of Ravenna claimed for themselves a position almost equal to that of Rome. Worse still were the scandals which so

frequently occurred in Rome itself. The papacy never succeeded in establishing right relations with the secular authorities of the city, for these, although they knew how great a part of their importance was derived from the presence of the Pope in their midst, could not endure to be dominated by the Pope. They could neither, it was said, do with him or without him, and there was therefore for a long time constant tension between the ecclesiastical and municipal authorities in Rome, and a problem presented here which proved nearly insoluble. No precise rule had as yet been laid down as to the methods of papal election; the emperor, the people, the nobles, and the clergy all claimed a part; but exactly what part should be allotted to each was not as yet determined. Much that

is legendary has probably collected round the Popes of this time, but what is certainly true is strange enough: thus Benedict IX. was chosen Pope at the age of twelve, and lived a life of open infamy, and finally resigned on condition that an annual

income should be allowed to him. The emperor, Henry III., had to interfere because the papacy was disputed among three claimants. He managed to dispose of all three, and it was hoped that a better condition would be established by the election of a German pope, Clement II. Other German popes followed and scandals were for a time avoided, but there was no security for the good rule of the Church while the elections to the papacy remained in their unsettled condition. Thus, while the Catholic Church as a whole was extending its

boundaries, strengthening its organization, and constantly acquiring a greater prestige in Europe, Rome itself seemed to be the plaything and the victim of the passions of the different parties. From Rome itself it was difficult to see how any real reform could come, but on this occasion as on so many others, what Rome could not do for herself the monastic movement did for her.

There had recently risen up a new monastic movement which had its centre in Cluny, in Burgundy. Monasteries were naturally liable to periods of depression and degeneracy, when the old ideals of St. Benedict grew faint and the rigorous discipline upon which he had insisted was felt to be burdensome. The whole history of monasticism shows us periods of depression followed by movements of revival, and the history of the papacy has always been closely dependent upon these variations in the character of the monasteries. One of the most important of revival movements was this of Cluny. It was essentially revivalistic: it added no new ideas on life or doctrine to those of St. Benedict, whose rule was still followed, but it brought to those ideas a new energy and enthusiasm and attached to them a different form of government. Whereas each of the earlier monasteries had been self-contained and self-governed, all the houses connected with Cluny were bound together by a strict organization; no monastery was allowed to elect its own head; each was governed by a prior, who was appointed by the Abbot of Cluny. It was hoped that in this way the errors of one house might be corrected by the vigour of the others. Ideas of strong monarchical rule were thus implied in the movement, and we shall see that they were soon transferred to the government of the Church as a whole. The Cluniac movement owes much of its celebrity and influence to the career of the monk Hildebrand, who subsequently was raised to the papal throne, and there took the name of Gregory VII. The religious history of the Middle Ages has no more notable, no more influential figure. He came first to Rome as the secretary of Pope Leo IX., and from that time until his death in 1085 his was the chief influence in ecclesiastical affairs. The

The  
Cluniac  
Reform  
movement.

Hildebrand  
(Gregory  
VII.).

independence of the Church was his aim throughout, and he saw two great enemies to that independence, and against them he fought his whole life through. The first was called Simony, the power of money in the Church, the influence generally, we may say, of secular power in the appointment of the clergy and in the control of their action; and the second was the irregularity in the lives of the clergy, the frequent and open breach of their vows of celibacy and other similar disorders. Hildebrand and the Cluniacs insisted upon the necessity of celibacy for all priests partly as moral discipline, and partly because they were thus removed from entanglement with secular powers, which would not have allowed them to think and to act solely in the interests of the Church.

Before he himself ascended the papal throne Hildebrand had secured one important change. In 1059 the method of papal elections was defined. The nobles and people of Rome were excluded from all direct influence upon the choice: the right of the emperor to confirm the election was very doubtfully acknowledged: the whole responsibility for the election was placed in the hands of the cardinals. Thus the independence of the Church at the centre was assured, and though there were in the future, as there had been in the past, disputed elections and occasional scandals in the life of the Popes elected, the system of Hildebrand on the whole worked well and has never been abandoned. It may be noted, too, that at the same council where this arrangement was made the doctrine of transubstantiation was clearly announced and defined. The ideas of Hildebrand found their ardent champions in Italy, but they also encountered much opposition. Bishop Aribert in Milan claimed for that city an independence in Church government and in the life of the clergy, which ran absolutely counter to the wishes of Hildebrand. In 1073 Hildebrand was raised to the papal throne. He was popular with the people as well as with the clergy, and he was acclaimed Pope by the people of Rome before he was formally elected in the manner recently laid down.

The Pope who thus ascended the papal throne is one of

the most noteworthy figures in mediæval history, and may be taken as representing the papal ideal at its highest and best. He is described as a small man of no very striking Personality appearance, but in him there burned an intense of Gregory will and an unshakeable belief in the righteousness VII. of the cause that he represented. The Church was for him the supreme institution in the whole world, deriving its authority directly from God, and in its turn giving power to the kings and the princes of the world. To assert the power of the papacy, to give to it in reality the influence which in theory always belonged to it, was the lifelong effort of Gregory VII. We are not left to conjecture in order to determine what his ideas and aims were. From a contemporary document, which expresses his ideas though it was not probably written by his hand, we may extract the following sentences: "The Roman pontiff is unique in the world. He alone can depose or reconcile bishops. He can be judged by no one. The Roman Church never has been deceived and never can be deceived. The Roman pontiff has the right to depose emperors. Human pride has created the power of kings, God's mercy has created the power of the bishops. The Pope is the master of emperors." A man with such ideas as these, with a large power and strong alliances behind him, could hardly fail to throw Europe into confusion in his effort to realize them.

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To the books referred to in the last chapter add Gregorovius *Rome in the Middle Ages*; Stephens, *Hildebrand and his Times*, R. L. Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Mediæval Thought*.

## CHAPTER IX

### The First Collision between the Emperors and the Popes

THE Emperor Henry IV. had come to the throne in the year 1056 when he was only six years of age, and the empire was in consequence submitted for many years to the weak rule of a regency. The early years of Henry IV.'s reign were full

of troubles with the baronage, and for a time it seemed as if the Imperial power would go down in this struggle, even before the power of the Pope was thrown into the balance against it. For the Saxons regarded with jealousy the rule of an Emperor who was not sprung directly from their race, and rose in rebellion against him. He was more than once defeated and forced to grant his enemies what they claimed. By the end of the year 1075, however, his difficulties had been for the moment overcome, and it was in this year that the great struggle with the papacy began.

The struggle between Gregory VII. and the Emperor Henry IV. may be regarded as the very centre or watershed of mediæval history, and it is important to grasp its real meaning. There was no personal hostility between the two men: the emperor was a good Catholic, the Pope was quite ready to treat the emperor with respect and even deference, and yet causes lying outside of their own personal characters drove them into a fierce struggle. The fact is that the relations between the emperors and the popes presented difficulties of which the world was as yet hardly aware, and which certainly there had been no attempt to settle. The emperor claimed that he was secular head of the world; the Pope claimed that to him was given the supreme ecclesiastical authority, and it turned out in practice that the powers which each claimed were not compatible with one another. The emperor claimed certain powers which the Pope also claimed, and when they became gradually aware of that, the question arose which was to give way. The contest is due therefore, to the difficulty of defining exactly where the authority of the one ended and the authority of the other began. It is the most striking phase of the perpetual contest, which runs through all history, between the spiritual and temporal powers, between Church and State, between authority which rests on persuasion and authority which rests on force.

The actual point at issue was the position of the bishops in the Catholic world generally, and especially in Germany, and their relation to the Pope on the one hand, and to the various temporal rulers on the other. As Gregory VII., full

of the importance of his office, and anxious to advance the claims of the Church at every point, surveyed the European world, he saw that in many places, but especially in Germany, the bishops, whose nominal task it was to administer the sacraments and to act as the greatest of the officials of the Church, were in fact appointed by a king or an emperor and employed by him as his ministers or his agents for the ordinary business of administration. There were, no doubt, reasons for this, and we have seen some of them; but to Gregory it only appeared that the men who ought to have been jealous for the honour and the power of the Church, and who ought to have been guarding it against all possible encroachment, were themselves the agents of the most dangerous rival of the Church. He issued, therefore, in 1075, a papal decree against lay investiture, that is to say, against the practice whereby laymen from the emperor downwards appointed Church dignitaries and gave them the ring and the crosier as symbols of their office.

The question of the position and election of bishops.

Decree against lay investitures.

Such a method of appointment distinctly implied that a bishop, so appointed was bound to render obedience to the emperor first, and that his duty to the Pope was subordinate to that. So Gregory VII. declared that, "if any emperor, king, duke, marquis, count, or any lay power or person has the presumption to grant investiture, let him know that he is excommunicated." The issue was, therefore, clearly stated. The Pope announced his determination to take from the emperor the agents through whose hands the empire had been most efficiently administered. No wonder the contest soon grew hot.

The Pope's letter of protest was answered by Henry IV. in terms which amounted to a declaration of the Pope's deposition: "Henry King, not through usurpation but through the holy ordination of God, to Hildebrand, at present not pope but false monk . . . descend and relinquish the apostolic chair which thou hast usurped. Let another ascend the throne of Saint Peter who shall not practise violence under the cloak of religion, but shall teach the sound doctrine of Saint Peter. I, Henry, King by the Grace of God, do say to thee descend,



descend, to be damned throughout all ages." The Pope's reply is in much better taste, and sometimes pathetic in its tone. "O Saint Peter, chief of the apostles, incline to us I beg thy holy ears and hear me thy servant, whom thou hast nourished from infancy and whom until this day thou hast freed from the hand of the wicked who have hated and do hate me for my faithfulness to thee." The letter ends by a sentence of deposition, "I absolve all Christians from the bonds of the oath which they have made to Henry, the Emperor, and I forbid any one to serve him as King. And, since he has scorned to obey as a Christian, and has not returned to God whom he deserted, I bind him with the chain of anathema."

It was an audacious act, for the physical support of the papacy at first sight seemed to be ridiculously small in comparison with the overwhelming power that rested in the hands of the emperor. But the situation was not so unequal as it appears at first sight. We must lay great stress on the fact that the age was pre-eminently an age of faith; that men regarded the head of the Church and the powers that he wielded with unquestioning and superstitious awe, and trembled at the thought of being cut off by excommunication or interdict from the body of the Church. Then, too, nearly all Italy came to be leagued with the Pope in his struggle with the German Emperor. The Normans drew near to the Papacy. Pope, Matilda of Tuscany gave him ungrudging assistance, and even the great towns of the north soon came to see in the papacy their champion against the foreigners from beyond the Alps. Nor was Henry IV. at all sure of the united support of Germany itself; the troubles with the nobles soon broke out again and were fomented by princes of the royal household, and even by the emperor's sons. It was the alliance of the papacy with the discontented elements of Germany which, at the most critical moment, brought the emperor to his knees. That moment came in the year 1077. Henry IV. was struggling against his nobles in a diet of the empire which had been called at Tribur. The feeling against the emperor had been outspoken, and it had

The forces  
on either  
side.

The  
Italian  
allies of the  
Papacy.

The  
enemies  
of the  
Emperor in  
Germany.

been decided to hold another diet shortly at Augsburg, where it was hoped that the Pope himself would appear and depose Henry from the throne. The forces against the emperor seemed overwhelmingly strong. He might very likely be thrust upon one side, like the last of the Merovingian kings, and see one of his great nobles raised by the support of the papacy to the position from which he had been driven. Henry IV. decided to meet these grave dangers by an abject surrender. The Pope was residing at the castle of Canossa, on the northern slopes of the Apennines, with Matilda of Tuscany. Thither in the winter the emperor went, and approaching Canossa, he asked to be allowed to present himself before the Pope and to sue for pardon. Gregory did not yield until the emperor had been subjected to the deepest humiliation. On three consecutive days the emperor presented himself before the door of the castle, and stood, the Pope tells us, barefoot in the snow, only to be driven away again by the stern command of the Pope. At last, upon the mediation of the Countess Matilda, the emperor was admitted. He threw himself at the feet of the Pope, he was raised and pardoned, and concord seemed established between the two great representatives of Church and State. "Conquered by the persistency of his compunction and by the constant supplications of all those who were present, we loosed the chain of the anathema and at length received him into the favour of communion, and into the life of the holy mother Church." Such is the account given of the event by Pope Gregory VII.

This famous scene, "the penitence of Canossa," has remained in men's memories ever since. It seems to mark the very highest point of papal powers, and gives us an unsurpassed instance of the humiliation of the highest of temporal powers before the claims of an ecclesiastic: and yet the situation was not quite all that it appeared to be. Henry IV. had gained much by his timely surrender: he had prevented Gregory VII. from undertaking a journey to the diet of Augsburg, and from co-operating with the nobles of Germany in his deposition. The penitence of Canossa gave him breathing space in which to prepare for

the further struggle, and very soon the struggle was resumed, and resumed with all the old bitterness. Gregory again declared the emperor deposed, and he appointed another man in his place. Henry IV., on his side, declared that Gregory was no longer Pope and bestowed the title upon another bishop. The troubles in Germany having for the moment settled, Henry IV. was able to undertake an expedition against Rome in 1081, and he proceeded to blockade the Pope in his own city, but when victory seemed within his grasp, the ravages of malaria forced the emperor to withdraw. A few years later (in 1084) he was again before the walls of Rome, and this time mastered nearly the whole of the city and laid siege to Gregory VII. himself within the walls of the castle of St. Angelo. It seemed as if in a short time the Pope would

**The Pope  
rescued by  
Robert  
Guiscard.**

be in the hands of his great antagonist; but a rescue appeared. He had summoned the Normans to his aid, and Robert Guiscard received his appeal when he was laying siege to Durazzo upon the eastern coast of the Adriatic. He came back at once to Italy; it was not only religious zeal and devotion to the papacy which urged him to do so, though these were unquestionably serious sentiments with him, but he saw in the emperor the great rival whom he did not desire to see victorious in central Italy, and so he returned quickly and marched upon Rome. The Imperial troops could not resist the assault of the terrible Normans. Henry IV. retired, and Gregory VII. was saved. But the Normans, though they had saved the Pope, proceeded to plunder the Holy City with dreadful thoroughness; neither Alaric nor Genseric had done such damage to Rome as these devout allies of

**Death of  
Gregory  
VII.**

the Pope. Gregory VII. retired with them from the execration of the Roman people, and shortly afterwards died in Salerno. "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity," are said to have been among his last words, "and therefore I die in exile." His death did not bring the struggle to an end, for the contest was not between Henry IV. and Gregory VII., but it was between the Emperor and the Pope, and we shall see that in spite of all well-meaning attempts to establish peace, the

contest was constantly renewed until nearly two centuries later it ended in the destruction of one of the combatants. We may notice here that in 1095 the first Crusade was preached, and the enthusiasm called out by that event, and the success which attended the arms of the crusaders raised still higher the prestige and the authority of the Pope.

Henry IV. died and was succeeded by Henry V. in 1106, and the relations of the new emperor with the papacy were strained and hostile. But soon thoughts of compromise and conciliation came to the front, and **Henry V.** it was hoped that negotiations with Pope Paschal had really found out the road to peace. The clergy, it was stated, were willing to resign all their temporal possessions, and then the emperor on his side would resign his claim to investiture. Believing that these terms had been accepted, Henry V. went to Rome and was there crowned. But the peace was short lived. There was a vigorous protest made against what seemed the abject surrender of the Pope, and perhaps there had never been any real intention of putting the terms into operation. The ceremony of the coronation itself was interrupted by riot and bloodshed; Henry V. fled from Rome, and the matter was again submitted to the decision of arms. We must not follow the ensuing years which reproduced the main features of the earlier time. There were excommunications and royal letters, there was an anti-pope and there was an anti-emperor. There were negotiations and proposals which never touched the real point at issue. But on both sides there was deep weariness of the struggle and its consequences, and at last in 1122, Pope Calixtus II. managed to negotiate an arrangement, the so-called "Concordat of Worms," which brought the **The Concordat of Worms, 1122.** long struggle at any rate to a truce. The arrangement was made possible by taking a narrow view of the point at issue, and refusing to consider the wider question of the conflict between the two powers. It was agreed that the election of the bishops should be left in the hands of the authorities of the Church, and that the ring and the crosier, the insignia of their spiritual office, should be given them by the Pope. But, on the other hand, a representative of the emperor was to be

present at all elections, and disputed elections were to be referred to him. All bishops, moreover, were to do homage to the emperor for the lands which they held within his dominions, and for their temporal possessions were to receive from the emperor a separate investiture.

The Concordat of Worms was a well-meaning attempt to settle a struggle which was doing much damage, and the arrangement that was made worked for a time fairly well, but there were great issues which still remained unsettled, and indeed, untouched. The Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire claimed for himself by his very title, a sort of universal sovereignty. He took to himself the traditions of the old Roman Empire, and aspired to control every department of the life of man, and on the other side the Popes could be satisfied with nothing less than universal dominion, and they also were unwilling, in theory, and when they saw their opportunity, in practice, to admit any limitation or boundary of their authority and power. While such beliefs were held, and such claims advanced, peace was not in the long run possible.

Many of the documents relating to the struggle between Gregory VII. and Henry IV. are translated in Henderson's *Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*. It is from this volume that the translations given above are taken.

## CHAPTER X

### The Second Phase in the Struggle between the Emperors and the Popes

"In your kingdom," wrote the Pope, shortly before the passing of the Concordat of Worms, to the Emperor Henry V., "Bishops and Abbots are so occupied in secular cases that they are compelled to frequent the County Courts and to engage in soldiering. The ministers of the altar have become ministers of the court." Frederick I., whose career now claims our attention, declared that the bishops appointed by





Imperial mandate were superior in learning and spirituality to the nominees of the chapters, and there is reason to believe him. But the character of the clergy was only one point at issue in the contest though an important one. The policy of the Popes aimed at wresting from the hands of the Emperors their most efficient instrument of government.

The struggle was one between the Pope and the Emperor, between the Imperial crown and the Papal tiara, between one who claimed the obedience of all the world as the descendant of the Cæsars, and one who claimed equally universal obedience because he was a successor of St. Peter. But although it was on this high ground that the issue was usually argued when the advocates of either side issued books or made speeches, it was in practice largely a matter of balance of power and diplomacy. The Pope was for a long time able to rely upon allies of great military strength whose interest coincided with his own, so far, at least, as resistance to the empire went, and the catastrophe to the papacy at the beginning of the fourteenth century arrived when this alliance failed him. It will be necessary therefore to look at the condition and the supporters of the two great combatants upon the eve of the renewal of their struggle.

Henry IV. was succeeded in Germany by Lothair of Saxony, in 1125, and in 1138 Conrad III. of Hohenstaufen was elected to succeed him. Conrad's power lay chiefly in Franconia and Swabia, and the house to

Issue at  
stake in  
the war  
struggle.

TheHohen-  
staufen.

which he belonged drew its origin from a castle in the south-west of Swabia, called Hohenstaufen. This family, with short intervals, occupied the Imperial throne henceforth so long as the mediæval empire was a strong and living force. In 1152 Conrad III. was succeeded by his nephew, Frederick I., who was known to subsequent ages, though not to his own, as Frederick of the Red Beard (Barbarossa). He was the most splendid of all the mediæval emperors, if not the strongest or the most successful, and in the disastrous period that was shortly to follow, Germany looked back to his reign as to a time of military glory, commercial prosperity, and intellectual and artistic splendour. The cities of Germany

Frederick  
Barbarossa.



were now reaching a development analogous to that which we have observed in the cities of Italy. Cologne, Mainz and Augsburg were the most important, and these cities had an independence of government and of life, and a keen interest in all the arts, little if at all inferior to what we have noted in Italy, and these three are only typical of the general municipal movement which was to be found in Germany, especially in the west and in the south. As the cities in France looked to the king, so the cities in Germany looked to the emperor as their friend and protector, and regarded the feudal nobles as their chief enemies or rivals, and the Imperial authority in its turn found its chief support among the German cities. They may count, therefore, as a distinct and strong force which was working against feudalism and aristocracy. Another force working in the same direction, though not destined for the present to produce much result upon German soil, was the revived study of Roman Law. We have already spoken of the importance of this, and we have said that, as men turned to it, it seemed to them by reason of its splendid order and reasonableness, like another revelation from Heaven. It is important here to see that its whole tendency was anti-feudal. It had been developed at a time when Roman emperors ruled with no nominal check upon their power, and when their edicts were accepted as final. Roman law, therefore, had taken as its maxim, the famous sentence "what the prince decrees has the force of law," and, wherever Roman law was taught, its tendency was to efface or to reduce the powers of nobles and of all authorities except the central authority of the king or prince. Feudalism, indeed, found no place in Roman law because feudalism did not exist at the time when Roman law was growing to maturity.

There were, therefore, forces at work in Germany—and strong forces too, which were distinctly favourable to the advancement and development of the Imperial nobles of power. But it found at the same time a very serious rival in the powers and pretensions of the great aristocratic houses. This is the force against which the empire had had to fight ever since the days of Charlemagne,

and still more clearly, since the time when Otto the Great had assumed the Imperial crown. The great national dukes, it is true, had been reduced in power, and their territories had to a very large extent been broken up, but there was always the tendency for large estates to be joined together again in a single pair of hands, and in the time of Frederick Barbarossa, feudalism was an even more dangerous and disruptive force than it had been under Charlemagne.

Henry the Lion and Otto I. Henry the Lion was its greatest representative. He was the head of the house of the Guelfs, and a cousin of Frederick. By inheritance and by marriage he had come into possession of the two great duchies of Bavaria and Saxony. To these original possessions he had added others. He had carried the arms and the civilization of Germany far into the East, and was the chief agent in that Germanization of the Eastern lands which is one of the great features of this time. He ruled over territories which were as large and nearly as wealthy as those territories in Franconia and in Swabia over which the Emperor Frederick ruled in his own personal right. The Emperor was bound, therefore, to feel towards him as towards a possible and dangerous rival, but at first there was nothing but friendship between them, and the early victories of the emperor owed much to the support of the Lion's sword. But when, later, that friendship gave way to rivalry, the result was quickly seen, not only in the confusion of Germany, but in the deep humiliation of the Imperial authority south of the Alps. During the early years of Frederick's reign, however, the empire possessed a great force, and it was in the hands of a man, capable, imaginative, and ambitious, who would not be content if it did not produce some great result in the European world.

If we turn to Italy, we find at first no representative of the papacy who is to be compared for force of character and statesmanlike power with Gregory VII., and the names of the popes who followed immediately after him need not be recounted. But though there was not at first any great pope, there lived at this time a great churchman, second to none in importance in the whole of the Middle Ages. St. Bernard (1091-1153) dominates the Church

politics of his period as completely as Gregory VII. had dominated those of his own age. He owed much to his own character and genius, and much also to the monastic order to which he belonged. We have laid stress already upon the close connection between the fortunes of the papacy and the rise or fall of the various orders. Its growth and greatness are closely connected with St. Benedict and with the later monastic movement which was set on foot in Cluny. Now

**The Cistercian** another monastic movement, the Cistercian, had come up and was spreading on a great wave of order.

enthusiasm throughout all western Europe. One of its earliest names is that of an Englishman, Stephen Harding, who was a friend of the founder, and who procured from the Pope the famous Charter of Love in 1119, which is the basis upon which the order henceforth rested. The Cistercian movement, like the Cluniac before it, was essentially a revival: it took up in the main once more the ideas of St. Benedict, and insisted upon their being strictly carried out. The Cistercians in many instances broke away from some Benedictine house already established in a large city, and fearing the distractions and temptations of society, fled into a desert for meditation and prayer. The new order brought no essential novelty into the monastic life. But the Cistercians were on friendly terms with the bishops to whom the monks of an earlier period had shown great opposition. They were not like the Cluniacs wholly dependent upon the will of a single man; rather, they established an aristocratic form of government, in that the heads of all Cistercian houses met together in a common chapter to decide upon matters which concerned the whole order. A special feature, too, of the Cistercian houses was their devotion to the worship of the Virgin Mary

The Cistercian order would in any case have been important, but it owes its European celebrity to the name of St. Bernard.

**The influence of Saint Bernard.** He entered the order at an early age, became the abbot of the great Cistercian house of Clairvaux, and throughout his life was one of the most powerful influences in European affairs. He interfered to crush and to confound the great heretic, Abelard, who was maintaining at Paris the thesis "that faith is an opinion."

He was strong enough to bring to an end a schism which threatened to divide the Church through the rival claims of two men to the papacy. It was he who induced the powers of Europe to participate in the second crusade, and although he was dead before the struggle between emperors and popes again reached an acute stage, we cannot fail to see in the power of the Church a result of his influence and his work.

The popes in the coming struggle would be without the help which had been so devotedly rendered to them by Matilda of Tuscany. Upon her death her territories were claimed by various competitors, and no longer could they count as a force upon the papal side.

In the south the Normans were advancing from strength to strength. Roger of Sicily reigned until 1154, and during the latter part of his life he had often not been on the best of terms with the papacy. But in 1156 his successor, William I., after a quarrel with the Pope, and a victory over him, made a treaty with him and promised him his support against all his enemies. He was succeeded by William II. of Sicily (1171-1189) and under him the Norman dominion reached its most splendid development. Its population was a strangely mixed one, and contained men of various languages, races and religions; for there were in Southern Italy and Sicily not only Italians, but Normans, Greeks and Saracens, and the essential feature of the Norman government was that it showed a practical toleration to these different faiths and modes of life, and found in this toleration a cause of its strength and progress. It was found to be possible for men of different languages, races, and religions to live together, to fight side by side with one another, and to contribute mutually to the strength of one state. Palermo was enriched with splendid architecture, and the whole of the south of Italy entered upon an era of intellectual and artistic greatness which has never been repeated in its history. The Norman kings as we have noted had their own quarrels with the popes, and their devotion to the Church was not quite so simple as it had once been. But when they had to choose between the Pope and the Emperor, they saw with alarm the possibility that the King of Germany

might establish his rule without a rival in Italy, and they unhesitatingly drew their swords on the side of the Pope.

The force upon which we need most carefully to fix our eyes is that of the Communes or cities of northern Italy.

**The Italian Communes.** They had been rising into importance for some time, as we saw in the last chapter. The twelfth century saw them making their way to a position of un-

rivalled importance and wealth in Italy. Their rapid development is to be ascribed largely to the volume of commerce which rolled through the cities of northern Italy. This had been very much increased by the movement of the crusades, one result of which was to bring to the maritime cities of Italy the wealth of the East, and thus Genoa, Pisa, Florence, Milan and Venice became rich and splendid beyond any cities in Europe. They claimed for themselves the management of their own affairs; they were no longer content to be ruled, even for their own good, by their bishops. Feudalism had never been very strong in north Italy, and the cities had for the most part triumphed over the power of the neighbouring nobles, forcing them in some instances to leave their castles and to live within the city walls. It was not only in the north of Italy that this communal movement was to be found: it had had a moment of great brilliance in Naples, and Rome itself had striven to

**Arnold of Brescia in Rome** realize the same sort of life as had been attained by the more fortunate cities of the north. Arnold of Brescia, a pupil of the great schoolman and heretic, Abelard, had stirred up the city of the Seven Hills to claim the control of her own affairs independently of nobles, and independently of the papacy too, and for a moment it had seemed as though his effort would be attended by complete success.

These cities in their advance had shaken themselves free, as we have seen, from the control of nobles and of bishops: they came also into conflict with the emperor.

**Conflict of the Communes with the Emperor.** The empire claimed over them certain rights (the so-called "Regalia"), such as control of roads and bridges, the control of the armed forces, the right even of appointing certain magistrates; and, if the ambitions of the cities were not to be checked, it would

be necessary to repudiate the claims which the emperors advanced. We may say therefore of them what we have said of the Normans. Their relations with the papacy were not always entirely harmonious, but as between emperor and papacy they were altogether on the side of the latter, and the popes found in them some of their most eager and efficient allies.

The relations between Frederick and the papacy had been strained early in his reign. Pope Hadrian IV. in 1157 had sent a letter to Frederick, in which he used words which seemed clearly to imply that the emperor was subordinate to the Pope; for he spoke of the empire as a "benefice" (*beneficium*) which the Pope conferred upon the emperor. This was language which seemed to imply a complete condition of feudal subordination, and against it the emperor naturally protested, declaring that the empire belonged to him by the election of the princes and the gift of God alone, and recalling the verse of scripture which bade men fear God and honour the king. The Pope explained away his words as not having the technical meaning which was ascribed to them: by *beneficium* he had meant, he said, not benefice, but benefit; but friendly relations had not been completely established at the time of Pope Hadrian's death.

The relations of the emperors with Italy were always a difficulty. They were kings of Italy as well as of Germany and Burgundy; and they felt their dignity incomplete until they had received the imperial crown at Rome at the hands of the Pope. Nor were they, Germans though they were, always felt to be foreigners in Italy. The sense of Italian nationality had hardly begun to be developed; and there were always Italian cities to be found which were ready to join with the German Emperor in an attack on their own countrymen. But generally the Italians resented the Imperial claims, and the Romans especially felt that they ought to have some share in conferring the title of Roman Emperor, and should at least receive something for the grant of the title. The Germans would only answer that they bought the empire with steel, and not with gold. The cities of Italy were so rich that the

Position  
of the  
Emperors  
in Italy.

emperors desired to possess, to rule, and to tax them, and thus they came into collision with the desire of the Italian communes for independence.

Frederick I. entered Italy six times. The first occasion was to receive the Imperial crown (1155), and Frederick's even that was not accomplished without loss in first Italian Rome from fighting and pestilence. In 1158 he journey. came again, that time to show to the proud cities of Italy the might of the Roman Empire, the restoration of whose former glory he declared to be the chief object of his reign. All went well with him on this occasion. Assisted His second by the jealousy of many Italian towns he reduced journey. Milan to submission, and then held a diet at Roncaglia, near Bologna, where he asserted the rights of the Imperial crown in Italy. The emperor was henceforth to enjoy the reality of sovereignty in Italy as in Germany; and all that emperors had ever possessed in Italy The Diet of Roncaglia. was to be restored to Frederick. He was to collect tolls on highways and rivers, in ports and in markets. The cities were to receive at his hands magistrates to be called *podestàs*, who were to hold in check the ordinary municipal officials. Had these intentions been carried out the destiny of Italy would have been entirely changed; it would have enjoyed peace and prosperity perhaps, but its glorious achievements in art and letters could hardly have grown except from the soil of freedom. Many of Rebellion and siege the cities of the Lombard plain resented the new of Milan. regime; and Milan resisted the emperor's arms in a siege of three years (1159-1162) before it surrendered to the pressure of famine. Frederick decreed that the proud city should cease to exist; that its fortifications should be destroyed and its population transplanted elsewhere. The emperor seemed without a rival in Europe; but he had reached his zenith, and the rest of his reign saw in Italy little but failure.

Rome was to be the storm-centre for the rest of his reign. In 1159 a papal election had resulted in the choice of Pope Alexander III. Alexander III. But certain discontented cardinals declared that the election was invalid, and that the true Pope was one Victor IV. Alexander III. had already

shown himself an opponent of the empire, and Frederick pronounced in favour of the claims of Victor. Hitherto he had had little trouble with the papacy. He was a devout Catholic of unquestioned orthodoxy; but henceforth Alexander III. was his enemy, and joined the Italian cities of the north in opposing him. At first Alexander III. could not maintain himself in Italy and retired to France. But soon troubles arose among the Lombard communes which gave him his chance.

The cities of the north, taught by their experiences of the last years how powerless they were singly, forgot their mutual animosities and formed a league, which is known as **The Lombard League**. It was a movement which clearly threatened the position of the emperor. In the year 1165, Alexander III. came back to Rome from his exile in France. It was necessary for the emperor once more, to interfere, and in 1166 he came to Italy. It was the fourth of his Italian expeditions. Again all went well **Frederick's fourth Italian expedition** with him at first: the newly-formed league could not oppose his passage through the north: he passed down towards Rome and again his armies entered within the walls. But just in the moment of his triumph there fell upon him a great disaster, in which contemporaries saw the finger of God. The plague struck his victorious troops and swept them off by thousands. With forces reduced almost to nothing he had to creep away through Italy towards the Alps again, and all his enemies raised their heads as he fled, for the work of his expedition was quite undone. **Failure of the Emperor.** "Never since the world began," wrote Thomas Becket, "have the power and justice of God been more clearly manifested than in the destruction by so shameful a death of the authors of this great persecution." In the year 1167 the Lombard league was formed in its most elaborate and final form, embracing nearly all the cities of the north from Venice to Milan, and from Brescia to Bologna, and they decided to establish a new city to be called Alessandria, in honour of Pope Alexander III. high up in the Lombard plain, destined to watch the hostile city of Pavia. It was clearly necessary for the emperor to appear yet once again.

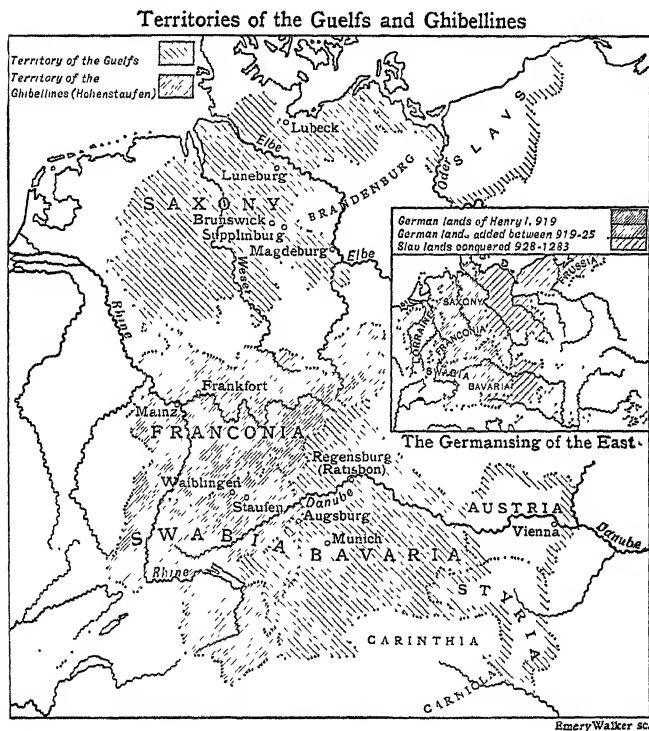


He marched into Italy for the fifth time in the year 1176. His chances of success were seriously diminished by the **Battle of Legnano.** quarrel which had broken out between himself and his great subject, who had hitherto been his friend, Henry the Lion. Henry had given him valuable support in his Italian expeditions of an earlier time, but now he refused to accompany him. Frederick met the forces of the Italian communes at Legnano, not far from Milan, and there fought the decisive battle. It was in the main a struggle between German knights and Italian foot soldiers. The Lombard troops had been carefully organized, and many had bound themselves by an oath to defend their cause to the death. They were grouped round a great car on which were displayed the banners of the various cities. After a long battle the courage of the Italians and the treason of some of the emperor's followers determined the issue, and the emperor was utterly routed. He saw all his high hopes of dominion in Italy disappear: he accepted the mediation of his great opponent the Pope, and at last, in 1177, he met Pope Alexander III. in the portico of the Cathedral of St. Mark, in Venice. It was just a hundred years since the great humiliation of Canossa, and this was a humiliation almost as complete. He knelt before the Pope and begged for his forgiveness, and when the Pope mounted his mule he held the stirrup, and would have held the bridle if the Pope had not declined the compliment. A few years later, in 1183, the victory of the cities was defined and declared by the peace of Constance. The cities were now recognized as practically independent; they governed themselves; they had their own armies, their own fortifications, their own jurisdiction. The emperor had not technically abandoned any territory but his real dominion south of the Alps was reduced to a shade.

The struggle between Frederick Barbarossa and his enemies, who group themselves round the Pope, is the most picturesque and the most important event of his reign, and we have already seen that it prevented him giving to German affairs the attention which could have been profitably bestowed upon them. But many things, important in view of their future influence, were

**Frederick I.'s reign in Germany.**

happening in Germany during his reign. We will briefly enumerate some of them. Hardly had Frederick made terms with the papacy at Venice than he turned to face his enemies north of the Alps, and the chief of these was Henry the Lion.



Territories of the Guelphs and Ghibellines.

So great were Henry's personal possessions that some German historians have thought that it would have been better for the unity of Germany if he had succeeded in resisting the emperor's attack. But after much fighting the emperor was successful, and the territories of his rival were broken up and divided amongst various claimants. This was by no means the end

of the Guelf power, but never again were the Guelfs serious claimants for the leading position in Germany.

Connected with this struggle against Henry the Lion are to be noted certain events which contribute to that spread of German civilization eastward, which is one of the most important events of this period. Since the time of Charlemagne, German civilization east of the Elbe had gradually disappeared

before the onslaughts of Slavonians and Magyars, The but now the eastern movement had begun again. Duchy of Austria.

Two points chiefly deserve notice. In 1156 the territories lower down the Danube, and to the east of Bavaria, were made a separate and hereditary duchy. This territory which was first called the Bavarian Eastmark, came soon to be known as Austria, and it came later into the hands of a family which succeeded the Hohenstaufens, as the dominating force in Germany, and indeed in Europe. For it was in this Eastmark that the Hapsburgs, whose home lay in the south-west of Germany, first made themselves a great power. They gave to the empire a long series of emperors from the fifteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century; and then on the same basis there arose the present Austrian Empire. At first the Bavarian Eastmark was merely an outpost of German civilization against the Magyars, and as such it was given from the first an almost independent life. A little earlier were planted further north in Germany the beginnings of a power, which, after an obscure early history, was destined to be the rival, and at last the successful rival, of Austria. When the lands east of the Elbe had been occupied

again by the Germans, it was necessary to establish The begin- some stable form of government there, and the nings of some chief representative of German civilization, and the Brandenburg- chief ruler in those lands, which were then so wild, burg.

was the Margrave of Brandenburg. The first Margrave was Albert, known as the Bear, and the power which he attained was recognized in 1141 by the title of Elector. Albert belonged to what is known as the Ascanian house, and this after many variations of fortune, died out. It was not until Brandenburg came, some two centuries later, into the hands of the Hohen-zollerns that it found itself upon the road which has led it to

the empire of Germany and the highest military position in Europe.

At the end of his reign Frederick was induced to embark upon the Third Crusade in which he co-operated with Richard I. of England, and Philip II. of France. This crusade, which promised so brilliantly, ended without achieving anything of importance. His allies went by sea. Frederick took the land route across Asia Minor, and there, while fording a stream, he was drowned, borne down, it is said, by the weight of the heavy armour which he wore (1190).

Death of  
Frederick  
on the  
Third  
Crusade.

In addition to the references of last chapter, note Freeman's Essay on Frederick I., in the first volume of his *Historical Essays*.

## CHAPTER XI

### The last Phase in the Contest between the Popes and the Emperors

A MARRIAGE which Frederick had arranged for his son, was destined to exercise an immense influence upon Italy, Germany, the papacy, and indeed the whole of European civilization. He had arranged that his son, Henry, should marry Constance, the heiress of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and thus the great Norman kingdom of the South, which had hitherto counted as one of the most dangerous and inveterate foes of the emperor, was now indissolubly bound up with the fortunes of the Hohenstaufen emperors, and this ally, which had rendered such valuable service to the papacy would henceforth, it was clear, stand upon the side of the empire in any contest that took place between it and the papacy.

Marriage  
of Henry  
VI. and  
Constance  
of Naples.

Henry came to the throne at his father's death in 1190 as

Henry VI. He ruled over vast possessions, and he entertained ambitions of the widest scope. He dreamed of converting the

empire, which at present rested upon vague methods of election, into a definite hereditary monarchy, and if he had succeeded in this, Germany would, in all probability, have been saved from those many divisions which were to break its power in the coming centuries. He dreamed also of a great expedition against that Eastern empire which still ruled in Constantinople. But these distant aims could not be readily or immediately pursued in view of the difficulties which he encountered in making himself master of those dominions which were admittedly his. The popes had seen with alarm the union of Germany, Naples, and Sicily in the same hands, and they attempted to prevent Henry VI. from establishing his rule in either country. He had civil wars to fight in Germany; and in the south of Italy he encountered a rival candidate for the throne in the person of Tancred, who had been put forward as a claimant by the papacy itself. He succeeded, however, in overcoming his enemies after a good deal of hard fighting, but before his death in 1197, it was apparent that the popes would view with determined hostility the new Norman-German power which he had established.

When Henry VI. died in 1197, his son Frederick was only a child, and for some time could have no personal influence upon the destinies of Europe. In the next year, 1198, Pope Innocent III. there came to the papal throne one of the most powerful men who ever sat there, Innocent III. Along with Gregory the Great, and Gregory VII., he brings before us the power of the mediæval papacy at its very highest, and in many respects, at its best. The claims of the papacy were put forward by him in the most uncompromising manner. He compared the relations between the empire and papacy to those between the moon and the sun. As the moon shone only by the borrowed light of the sun, so the strength of the empire was merely derived from the papacy. In the Middle Ages such metaphors as these were regarded as arguments, and henceforth all defenders of the Imperial power had to deal with this comparison as though it were a serious contention. Innocent III. made himself the spokesman of the Italian

dislike for the Germans, and declared it his aim to drive from Italy the hated German race. In his writings such phrases as these occur: "Ye see what manner of servant this is whom the Lord hath set over His people, no other than the vicegerent of Christ, the successor of Peter. He stands in the midst between God and man, below God but above man, less than God, but more than man. He judges all and is judged by none, for it is written 'I will judge.'" And again he writes: "The Lord left to Peter not only the government of the universal church, but of the whole world." A pope who held such views as these was bound to come into sharp contention with the temporal powers, and chiefly with the greatest of all temporal powers, the empire; and it is to be noted that no emperor, however friendly he might be at the time of his accession to power, was able to maintain for long, relations of friendliness with the Pope. The contest was not one of personal opinion or of sentiment; it was a collision between irreconcilable claims.

The empire was thrown into much confusion by the impossibility of finding a candidate agreeable to all the electors. There were two candidates, Philip of Hohenstaufen, and Otto of the house of Guelf, son of Henry the Lion. The Pope threw his influence on the side of Otto, and he became recognized as emperor in the year 1208. He was loud in his protestations of gratitude to the Pope. "My kingship," he wrote, "would have dissolved in dust and ashes had not the authority of the Apostolic Church weighed the scale in my favour." He came into Italy, made many concessions to the papal authority there, and was crowned at Rome in 1209. But friendship between a pope and an emperor could not long endure. Otto IV. claimed the inheritance of the Two Sicilies, and the Pope was determined not to allow this union between Germany and south Italy to be established. He raised up enemies against Otto in Germany, and above all he appealed to Frederick, the son of Henry VI., whom in 1211 he declared king and emperor with the title of Frederick II. He had thus in the heat of the contest, in order to overthrow

Rival  
claims  
to the  
Empire.

Frederick  
II. made  
Emperor  
by the  
Pope.

Otto IV., raised up one who was destined to be among the most dangerous opponents that the papal see ever knew. Frederick had to fight long and hard before he could obtain the reality of Imperial rule, but the alliance of the papacy and of the King of France were strong forces upon his side, whilst Otto IV. had no ally except King John of England. In 1214 the battle of Bouvines, so important for English and French history, wrecked the hopes of Otto IV. and gave to Frederick secure hold on the Imperial title and power.

Innocent III. exercised in Europe an authority greater than that which had ever belonged to a pope before him : he had given to the empire the man of his own choice, and had taken it from an opponent : the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, Sweden, Denmark, Aragon and Portugal all recognized, even though in vague terms, the feudal suzerainty of the Pope. His interference in England had been decisive and successful ; he had forced Stephen Langton into the throne of Canterbury ; he had procured from King John the promise of a yearly tribute and the submission of the crown of England. The strongest sovereign for the moment in Europe was Philip Augustus of France, and even this strong king was forced by papal opposition to dismiss his second wife and to take back Queen Ingeburga whom he had wronged.

It is necessary also to notice that upon the eve of the third and most desperate struggle between empire and papacy, a new religious movement and the formation of new religious orders vastly strengthened the Pope's hands. What the Cluniac movement had been for Gregory VII., and the Cistercian movement for Alexander III., the Rise of the Franciscans and the Dominicans and Innocent III. and his successors. These orders came to the help of the Catholic Church at a time of great danger. In spite of—

perhaps even in consequence of—the immense power which the Church had won, great masses of the population were being alienated from her. The use of the Latin tongue in her service and even in her sermons made a direct appeal to the people difficult, if not impossible. The poorer classes, especially in

the cities, were largely careless or hostile : and in the south of France, in the districts called Languedoc and Provence, religious or irreligious movements had begun which seemed to threaten the very foundations of the Church. Views were being openly preached which the Church regarded as heretical, and though some of these were probably purer and more Christian than the official teaching of the Church itself, it is certain that some of the views which go by the general name of the Albigensian Heresy, attacked the very foundations of religion, and even of morality. We must not exaggerate the extent of the danger : these movements were strong only in the south of France, and even there probably would soon have declined even if left to themselves. But the movement inevitably gave great anxiety to the authorities at Rome, and seemed to demand some new method of treatment. To win back the poorer classes to the Church, to appeal to men in their own tongue, and to combat the heresies that had rooted themselves in the south of France, these were the chief objects of the orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic.

St. Francis was born at Assisi in the centre of Italy : his father was a merchant dealing with France, and he himself seemed destined for the same career. But there came then a great change in his life ; he renounced all worldly ambitions and any career which might lead to gain ; he embraced a life of the most complete poverty, and devoted himself to the service of his fellows and of Holy Church. Around him there quickly grew up a considerable amount of legend and of myth, but the historical features of the career of St. Francis bring before us one of the purest, most beautiful, and most attractive figures that ever moved upon the face of the earth. At first there was little of organization in the movement ; he gathered round him a few men of ideas like his own ; he moved from place to place preaching and serving, relying everywhere upon alms for the sustenance of himself and of his followers. Only gradually did the idea of the formation of a special order emerge, and when he asked to be allowed to form an order which he desired to call the " order of the poor men of Assisi,"



the Pope at first hesitated to sanction the new movement or to accept the alliance of a force so different from anything which the Church had hitherto known, since at least the very earliest days of the Church. But soon the sanctity and the sincerity of St. Francis were apparent, and in 1209 the new order was formed.

The career of St. Dominic is contemporary with that of St. Francis, and his movement has many points of similarity with Saint that of the Franciscans The Albigensian heresies, Dominic. to which allusion has already been made, had called out a crusade, and in this crusade St. Dominic had played a part. From the first he had maintained that, though the use of violent methods was permissible, other weapons could be used with more effect against the zeal of the heretics. Zeal, he said, must be met by zeal, humility by humility, false sanctity by real sanctity, the preaching of falsehood must be met by the preaching of truth, and in 1213, his order, the order of the preachers, was founded with the special object of combating the heretical views which had their centre in the south of France.

We may speak of these two orders of Friars together, for their general characteristics are the same. They differed very widely from the monastic orders which had preceded them, Character- istics of the in that their aim was not meditation and the Friars. salvation of the souls of their members, but social service and the redemption of others. The friars were not to enclose themselves within the walls of any cloister, but to live in the world and to serve God by serving their fellow-men. At first it was ordained they were to have no settled home, no building of any kind devoted to them; and when later such buildings did arise they were a sign that these orders were falling away from the ideals of their great founders. In their organization we may notice especially the following points. First, they were to possess no property, and they were to live by begging. Secondly, they were to pay special attention to preaching, and they were to preach to the people of each country in the common language of that country. Thirdly, they were to take special vows of obedience and mutual love. A fourth feature which is

important as explaining something of their power is the division of the order known as the Tertiaries. These were men and women who did not wear the dress nor take the full vows of the order, but who, living in the world and living the ordinary life of the world, were connected with the order and were pledged to support it in every way.

These orders spread and developed with amazing rapidity. The Grey Friars and the Black Friars, as they were respectively called, were soon to be found established in all the towns of Western Europe, and they were especially numerous and strong in the south of Europe. Their organization is interesting and in many ways efficient, but their organization does not go far in accounting for their influence. The memory of their founders was a permanent force. Men remembered for long St. Dominic, the great "athlete of the faith"; but it was especially the life and character of St. Francis which came to men as a second revelation of purity, devotion and love. The stories of how he served the poor, how no disease was too repulsive for his attentions, no class too hostile or too miserable for his service, and how, in spite of all, he was ever gay and happy with his companions, not only loving men and women, but loving all animals and preaching even to the birds: all this amounted to a new force of the most important kind in the thirteenth century, and its influence has never entirely died out. To return to the point from which we began, we must regard the formation of these mendicant orders as a great force working on the side of the papacy in its next great contest with its secular opponent.

The secular and Imperial power in this new contest was represented by a very remarkable man, the Emperor Frederick II. We have seen that he owed his elevation to papal favour and support: but the worst enemies of the papacy were often found among those who had been its closest allies.

The Emperor Frederick II. is described as being a man of mean appearance; he was short in stature, and he inherited the red hair of his family. But he was a man of exceptional powers, and showed such originality in his actions and in his thoughts that he gained from his contemporaries the title of the "wonder of the world."

Spread and  
influence  
of the  
Friars.

Character  
of Frede-  
rick II.

There is no one like him in mediæval history ; he stands apart from the ideas and the enthusiasms that characterize the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and seems to anticipate rather a ruler of the later age, a Henry VII. of England, a Louis XI. of France, or perhaps one of the Italian tyrants of the Renaissance. He was a writer of poetry in the common language of the south of Italy, and he may thus be regarded as one of the pioneers of the movement which was soon to give Europe a great literature in the common tongue. He was interested in the development of science and philosophy, with which the south of Europe was much occupied. He founded the University of Naples, declaring in his charter that he did so "in order that those who have hunger for knowledge may find within the kingdom the food for which they are yearning, and may not be forced to go into exile and beg the bread of learning in foreign lands." He founded also a school of medicine at Salerno, and made a collection of wild animals at Palermo. Under his rule the south of Italy and Sicily became a progressive centre of thought and art such as they have never been again. Not only did Christians, such as Thomas Aquinas, the greatest of the mediæval schoolmen, contribute to this movement, but Saracen scholars were also patronized and supported, and the emperor was throughout on the most friendly terms with them. These scientific interests and the way in which he advanced them would perhaps have called down upon him the suspicion of the Church, even if he

**Frederick II.'s religious opinions.**

had not come into furious conflict with it on other grounds. He was later on branded as a heretic in many a furious papal document, but it is very hard to make out what his religious standpoint was.

The Pope in his wrath maintained that he disbelieved in the immortality of the soul, that he spoke of Moses, Abraham, and Christ as the three great impostors. But these seem to be little more than the wild outpourings of anger ; he himself always professed to be a Christian and a faithful supporter of the Catholic Church. It was not, he said, against the Church that he fought, but against the corruption and luxury of the Church. "I am no enemy of the priesthood ; I honour the priest, the humblest priest, as a father, if he will keep aloof

from secular affairs. It is by evil lusts, by avarice and rapacity that the Church is weakened, polluted, corrupted; against these evils it is my mission to contend with the sword. I will give back to the sheep their shepherd, to the people their bishop, to the world its spiritual father. I will tear the mask from the face of this wolfish tyrant, and force him to lay aside worldly affairs and earthly pomp, and to tread in the holy footsteps of Christ." It is certain that his ideas in religion went beyond the assertion of the obligations of poverty of the Church. Later, in his struggle with the papacy, he spoke in a way which implied that a layman might be the head of the Church; that the Emperor was worthy of as much reverence as the Pope, and he perhaps even claimed that reverence for himself. In these utterances there is much which seems vaguely to anticipate a secular headship of the Church such as was introduced into England by Henry VIII.

Frederick II. ruled over Germany and the north of Italy as emperor, and over Naples and Sicily ("the two Sicilies" as they were called) as king, by hereditary right. We see in him, therefore, those difficulties at their worst which confronted the emperors from the time of Otto the Great, through the divergent interests, and characters of Germany and the Italian peninsula, and we may see during his reign more clearly than in any other what evils came upon Germany through the pre-occupation of the emperor with his personal dominion in Italy. Frederick had made promises to the Pope that he would not make the connection between Sicily and Germany permanent, and that he would confer the southern kingdom on his own son, Henry, to be held as a fief of the papacy. But he broke his promise and preferred to live and to rule in Italy rather than in Germany; for in Naples he was a king indeed, whereas in Germany his Imperial power was much reduced by the rival power of the greater feudatories. In the two Sicilies he developed the strength of the monarchy against all rival powers. He weakened, where he did not overthrow, the powers of the feudal nobles; royal castles displaced the castles of the nobles; the cities found their independence limited; all the inhabitants of the kingdom were brought

Frederick II.'s conflict with the papacy.

into subordination to the royal law and to the king's courts. The provinces were ruled by his agents; **The two Sicilies.** the whole administration was supervised by his justiciar. The work was perhaps premature, and it was certainly not favourable to liberty. But Naples and Sicily enjoyed in consequence of it an order and a prosperity unsurpassed by any other part of Europe. The forces of Frederick, however, did not avail to govern both Sicily and Germany, and in order to have a free hand in Sicily, he at times almost abdicated his functions as ruler in Germany. Hence arose a curious contrast between the development of Sicily and the development of Germany during his reign.

**Germany.** Whilst feudalism was crushed or tamed at almost every point in Naples and Sicily, in Germany it became again the dangerous rival of the emperor. In 1239 Frederick issued a statute in favour of the princes of Germany, and by this he gave to them such large judicial and military powers, that the chief of them were henceforth practically independent of the central authority. The empire had hitherto seen in the great towns of Germany its warmest support; but now, the privileges of the towns were clipped in order to favour the nobles and in some instances suppressed. In spite of these attempts to win their support the nobles rose in a dangerous insurrection against him, and they found, strangely, an ally in the emperor's own son, Henry, who, like many heirs apparent, saw in an alliance with the discontented elements of the State an opportunity of winning power without waiting for his father's death. Henry was defeated and sent into lifelong imprisonment (1235), and the emperor made an attempt to restore the prestige and authority of the Imperial crown in Germany. But the nobles had already gained too much power, and the emperor soon found more than enough upon his hands in Italy. This attempt failed, like every attempt that was made before the nineteenth century, to give the German Empire an efficient government.

Between Frederick and the papacy there was no quarrel which turned on any dispute as to constitutional forms. Henry IV. had fought the papacy on the question of the election of bishops; Frederick I. had refused to recognize the

election of Pope Alexander III. ; but the contest between Frederick II. and the papacy, when it broke out, was a direct rivalry of power, and the two fought almost consciously and openly for the lordship of Italy. Frederick II., soon after his elevation to the throne, had taken the cross in obedience to the promptings of the Pope, to whom he owed so much, and the Pope urged upon him the accomplishment of his vow. We shall turn in a subsequent chapter to the history of the crusades, and we shall see how at this time the crusading fervour was burning low, and how the whole crusading movement was being driven from its early high aims, and was made to serve the purpose of commercial gain, and national advantage. Frederick II. was wholly unlike the crusader of the earlier type, and as he felt no enthusiasm for an expedition against the unbeliever, so, doubtless, he saw that his presence in the south of Italy was necessary for the consolidation of his power. The papacy, however, was urgent with him to go crusading, and in 1227 he embarked at Brindisi, nominally for the East ; he returned, however, in a few days, alleging a sudden attack of illness, and the Pope, in indignation against what he thought a mere subterfuge, at once excommunicated him. No man living under excommunication could properly go on a crusade, but, nevertheless, Frederick II. sailed in 1228, and his action on the crusade was as unusual as the circumstances of his departure. He professed no animosity against the Saracens, and undoubtedly he felt none. His second wife, who was the daughter of the titular King of Jerusalem, gave him a sort of claim upon the royal title there, and by diplomacy and negotiation, he won from the Saracens more privileges for Christian pilgrims than the early crusaders had won by the sword, and gained for himself the nominal crown of the kingdom of Jerusalem. He went up to the Holy City, but no priest could be found to crown an excommunicated king, and he therefore took the crown from the altar with his own hands, and with his own hands placed it upon his head. He returned home to find that the Pope had declared a crusade against him, and that a papal army was ravaging the territories of Naples. They were driven out,

and the Pope consented in 1230 to make peace with him and to release him from excommunication.

The peace was of short duration, and was followed by a still fiercer contest. The Pope was Gregory IX., who, almost to his 100th year, remained an active force in the politics of Italy. But it was not against him in the first place that Frederick came into conflict, but rather against those Lombard towns which had had so large a part in the humiliation of Frederick I. The communal movement had spread rapidly in Italy since the defeat of Frederick I. and the Treaty of Constance. There were city-leagues now in central Italy, corresponding to the Lombard League in the North, and all were defiant of the power of the emperor. A change had passed over the cities of Italy during the past half century. They were richer, more splendid, more conscious of their own powers. But their liberty had often degenerated into anarchy, owing to the fierce spirit of the parties; and they had in many instances gained temporary peace by giving the chief authority to a native of some other state who was called a *podestà*. In some cases tyrants had established themselves, and the chief of these was Ezzelino in Verona. Frederick II. determined to reduce the Communes to subjection. Their divisions allowed him to find allies among themselves, and Ezzelino supported him vigorously throughout. The fighting was often conducted with the greatest ferocity. Its early stages were favourable to Frederick. In 1237, the Communes were defeated at the battle of Cortenuova, and it seemed as though Frederick's triumph would be complete. But then, and for the same motives as formerly, the Pope joined hands with the cities, the emperor was excommunicated, and although Gregory IX. soon died, and Pope Innocent IV., friendly to the Emperor, succeeded him, he soon forgot in his office the feelings which he had entertained as a private person. In 1245 a Church Council was held at Lyons, and Frederick was denounced in terms of the utmost violence, and declared to be a Pharaoh, a Herod, a Nero. The emperor was not slow to reply. He declared that the popes had no right to depose him. "I hold my crown," he said, "from God

**Frederick II.'s struggle with the Communes of Italy.**

**Collision of Emperor and Pope.**

alone, neither the Pope, the council, nor the devil shall rend it from me." "Shall the pride of a man of low birth degrade the emperor who has no superior nor equal upon the earth?" The Pope, however, declared Frederick deposed, and set up another emperor in his place in Germany. The contest which followed was conducted with the utmost fury. The friars, whose influence was at its height, stirred up the people to hatred of the emperor's party. Frederick found allies in some of the towns of Lombardy, but the majority stood against him. In 1247, Frederick was sharply defeated at Parma which he was besieging, and when he died, three years later, in 1250, the issue of the struggle was still doubtful.

It is extraordinary to see what a change was made in the situation by his death. The power of the kingdom of Naples was the same; the situation in Italy and in Germany was the same; and yet, while Frederick II. could meet his foes at least on even terms, his successors very quickly collapsed before the Pope and his allies. The truth seems to be that the excellent government which he had established in Naples and Sicily had irritated the aristocracy against him, and the common people were not yet an important factor. All had depended upon Frederick's own strong will and power of organization, and when this was removed, the fabric that he had reared with such care, quickly fell in ruins. His son, Conrad IV., succeeded to him. He was in Germany at the time of his father's death, but found little chance of establishing a strong rule there, and came to try his fortune in Italy. He entered Naples, and seemed to have some chance of gaining the support of the kingdom when death cut short his career in 1254. He left behind him a young son who is known as Conradino, but the royal house was represented in Naples and Sicily by Manfred, the illegitimate son of Frederick II. Pope Urban IV. succeeded to the throne in 1261. He was a Frenchman, and was ready to use any means to expel from power what he called the "viper brood" of the Hohenstaufen. He offered the crown of the kingdom of Sicily to Charles of Anjou, the brother of the saintly King of France,

The end  
of the  
Hohen-  
staufen.

Conrad IV.

Manfred.



and the offer was accepted. It was thus primarily against French troops that Manfred had to struggle. With Charles, the Pope made a very strict contract, and it marks the degradation of the papal policy, that it was stipulated that if Charles failed in his payments to the papal treasury his kingdom should be laid under an interdict. Manfred, for a time, made head against the French army, but in 1266 there came a battle not far from Benevento, and there Manfred was defeated and slain. Charles of Anjou occupied Naples and Sicily, and soon his heavy taxation and his ferocious cruelty made him bitterly hated, and turned the memories of the people fondly towards Conradino. Conradino, who, in 1268, was only sixteen years of age. He was, however, a capable and ambitious youth, and he determined to take up the inheritance. He invaded Italy from the north. He was received with enthusiasm in Rome itself, but when he encountered the French army at Tagliacozzo, his forces were easily defeated and he himself taken prisoner. In August of the same year, he was beheaded in the market-place at Naples, and with him the great house of Hohenstaufen that had played so great a part throughout the central portion of the Middle Ages became practically extinct. The papacy had triumphed, but to secure that triumph it had used weapons which were more disgraceful, and in the long run more ruinous, to its power, than defeat itself could have been. The highest motives of religion, the supremest spiritual powers in the hands of the Pope, had been prostituted to personal and ambitious ends, and it is not surprising to find that the triumph of the papacy was followed in less than thirty years by the most severe defeat which it received in all its career, and we shall find that that defeat was administered by the French power which had been the instrument of the papal triumph.

Before we go further it will be well to notice certain happenings in Germany which are full of importance for the future of that land. A chief feature of German history from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries is the expansion of the influence and the nationality of Germany eastward. We have seen

already how the Elbe was no longer the eastern frontier of Germany. Its place had been taken by the river Oder. But beyond the river Oder, along the whole of the eastern frontier, Germany was confronted with non-German, and in part heathen races. The Hungarians (Magyars) were situated to the north of the Danube; to the north of them came the Bohemians (Czechs); then the Poles; and further to the north, on the shores of the Baltic, an agglomeration of Slavonic races of which the chief were the non-German and heathen Prussians. Against these last a singular and powerful force was now called into activity. We shall see how one of the strangest results of the crusades had been the establishment of military religious orders. The best known of these are the Knights Templars and the Knights Hospitallers; less known but in their ultimate influence not less important were the Teutonic Knights. Their first object had been to protect German pilgrims to the Holy Land: but the Christian conquests in the East had soon been swept away, and on the soil of Palestine there was nothing for them or for any other order to do. In 1228 they were allowed to transfer their crusading zeal from the shores of Syria to the Baltic, and they were given whatever lands they could conquer in Prussia from the heathen there; and so under their grand-master Hermann of Salza they proceeded to conquer the land and to rule it. Their action was indeed characterized by great brutality; they showed little desire to convert the heathen Prussians; their chief object seemed to be to slay and dispossess them. But in a long series of campaigns they won for Christianity and for Germany a large tract of land beyond the Oder and the Vistula, and looking forward into the distant future we may see (though no one at that time could have foreseen it) that these Prussian lands would form one of the two bases upon which the mightiest of all German powers was to be built, a power which would at last succeed in the task of uniting Germany under one government, in which the Hohenstaufen had disastrously failed.

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For Frederick II. see Tout's *Empire and Papacy*, and Freeman's Essay in the First Series of his *Historical Essays*. For Innocent III.

the Ecclesiastical History of Robertson and Milman. The Friars are also treated in these histories ; Sabatier's *Life of Saint Francis* is the chief modern study of its subject ; the *Little Flowers of Saint Francis* are translated and published in the Temple Classics. Miss Selfe's translation of *Villani's Chronicle* is useful throughout, though its first object is to illustrate the writings of Dante.

## CHAPTER XII

### Great Britain from the Roman to the Norman Conquest

BRITAIN has passed through all the main phases of European History. She was almost entirely absorbed into the Roman Empire, and was influenced by its culture and its language ; she was attacked and conquered by the Germans and the Danes ; the Catholic Church played an important part in moulding her life ; feudal institutions developed on her soil ; she rose to unity and importance in Europe through the action of a strong monarchy. But in certain respects Britain has stood apart from the rest of Western Europe, and her history has characteristics that are not exactly those of Spain or Gaul or Italy. The sea has been all through a profoundly important influence on her institutions and development.

#### I

The clear light of history first strikes our shores with the coming of Julius Cæsar. He was as skilful with the pen as Julius Cæsar. with the sword, and two books of his Commentaries give us invaluable information about the condition of the people of Britain. Those whom Cæsar came in contact with were mostly Celts, akin in race and language to the Gauls whom he was subduing on the other side of the

channel, and like them submitted to the influence of their priests, the Druids. It was this close connection between the two peoples, as well as the spirit of adventure, which made Caesar undertake his expeditions to Britain, which were rather raids to impress the islanders with the strength of Rome than any serious attempt to add the country to her domains. When he returned to Gaul in 54 B.C. the country fell back into its former condition. A century later, when the Roman Empire was strongly established and the Emperor Claudius was occupying the throne, a more serious effort was made. There was no unity in the island, and no military organization sufficient to allow the nation to resist with any chance of success. So, in spite of much

brave fighting, the Roman conquest flowed on, and in the course of a century reached its final limits. The larger part of the island was brought under the Roman administrative system up to the line of the Clyde and Firth of Forth. No attempt was made to conquer the barren Highlands of Scotland and their fierce inhabitants, nor any part of Ireland. The Romans marked the boundary of the province by drawing two great ramparts across the island; the one running from the Clyde to the Forth, of which only slight traces remain; the other, and more important, from the west to the Tyne, the ruins of which are among the most impressive Roman monuments in Europe. South of these great military works the country was governed much as Gaul or Spain or any other Roman province. There is no lack of Roman literature which gives us any vivid idea of the life that was lived by the inhabitants of Britain; though Tacitus, the great Roman historian, has written in his "Agricola" an admirable account of an episode in the conquest. The numerous remains of the Roman towns and houses allow us to reconstruct the life of the time. In Britain, as everywhere in the Empire, there came a great peace, interrupted by a few attempts to throw off the power of Rome, such as the rising of Boadicea in the year 61 A.D.; certainly a great contrast to the inter-tribal struggles which must have been constant before the coming of the Romans. Great roads were made throughout the island; intended at first for military

purposes, but serving equally well all the ends of commerce and social intercourse. Town life was introduced and developed. Some of the towns rose to the dignity of full municipal freedom. Roman traders, tax-gatherers, and money-lenders made their way into the country in considerable numbers; and along with them there came missionaries of Christianity. The remains of a Christian church have been identified among the ruins of the Roman town of Silchester. But most of the remains show us the military side of the Roman occupation; camps and fortifications; the villas which the Roman officers and settlers built in close imitation of those which they knew in Italy; the tombstones of the soldiers who died here; the altars to strange and foreign gods erected by the troops who, according to the Roman practice, were brought from distant provinces—even from Syria—to defend the frontiers of Britain. There is nothing to tell us what were the relations between the Romans and the natives, nor what degree of civilization was reached by the Britons; but probably, though not so far advanced as the Gauls or the Spaniards, they were ready to follow them in their acceptance of the culture and the language of Rome.

The Roman occupation lasted close on four centuries. There is no sign of any movement in our island that would have had the strength to shake the Roman power, nor probably was there any desire to attack it. But for reasons which we have examined elsewhere, the Roman power was decaying during the third and fourth centuries. Rome herself was in danger, and her legions could no longer be spared to defend distant frontiers. It was the attack of the Visigoths under their great chief Alaric which led to the recall of the Roman legions from Britain, about the year 410 A.D.

It is difficult to determine how far the later history of the island has been influenced by the Roman occupation. The **Influence of great Roman roads** were certainly the arteries **the Romans** through which the life of the island flowed for **in Britain.** centuries afterwards. Trees and fruits had been introduced which were valued and kept by the next comers; **it is not impossible** that from the villas of the Romans **may have** come an influence which moulded the subsequent

social institutions of the island. But Britain was not Romanized as Gaul and Spain and many other Roman provinces were. The Celtic language had not been overlaid by the Latin to anything like the same extent as in Gaul. It is strange that a Latin language survives in Roumania—the last of the conquests of imperial Rome—while the Roman occupation of four centuries left hardly any trace on the language which was spoken in our islands during the next epoch. Latin has influenced our language immensely, but the influence came through the Church and, later, through the Norman conquest and the revival of learning. The next invaders soon destroyed whatever knowledge of the Latin tongue the Roman soldiers left behind them at their departure.

## II

It was the Goths, the Southern Germans, and the Franks who had hitherto made the chief onslaughts on the Roman Empire. But the Romans were well aware of the dangerous character of the northern Germans, and of the English. The coming had already had some experience of their raids on the British coast, for they had established a Count of the Saxon Shore to cope with them. Now the retirement of the legions left Britain at their mercy. The Roman Empire had undertaken the whole burden of the defence of the provinces, and had disarmed the provincials themselves. The Britons therefore, during the four centuries of the Roman occupation, had become unused to the task of self-defence, and, when the German invaders came, were powerless to repel them. The wealth and the defencelessness of the country allured swarm after swarm of raiders from the mouths of the Elbe and the base of the Danish peninsula. They had a long stretch of sea to pass, and their boats would have seemed to a later period little suited for the task, but these men were wonderfully daring and adventurous, and they soon came in large numbers. They were untouched by Christianity; much fiercer and more cruel than the Goths who penetrated the of Rome; more like the terrible Franks, who were

same time trampling down the Roman culture of Gaul and establishing the bases of a new one. In spite of the sea and its dangers the fighting men who came first were soon followed by women and children. It was no mere military raid that Britain had to face, but a real wandering of a people.

The next four centuries form the dark age of English and British history. It is hard during this time to disentangle history from legend. If only we could see more clearly what was done between 500 and 800 in England, and how it was done, many problems that are now dark would be solved. How did Roman civilization disappear? What became of the old British population? How far were the institutions which the invaders brought with them modified by what they found here? How far and in what districts did Christianity survive? To none of these questions can a certain answer be given.

Disarmed though the British were, they did not yield their land without some hard fighting. The civil population of Italy did not struggle so hard against the Goths. The resistance of the Britons. It was a century and a half before the newly arrived race had definitely established its supremacy in the island. The legends of King Arthur probably rest on this base of fact, that the Celtic inhabitants, Christian and more civilized than the German invaders, offered a prolonged resistance which had its moments of triumph. The invaders can be divided into three racial groups. The Jutes attacked in Kent and in the neighbourhood of the Isle of Wight; the Saxons overran the rest of the south and east of England (the county of Essex or of the East-Saxons marks their northern limit along the coast); the centre and north of England right up to the Firth of Forth was occupied by the Angles or English. Little by little the invaders pushed the British back. The decisive blows were when in 577 by the battle of Deorham they occupied the Severn valley, and thus separated the Britons of Devon and Cornwall from their fellows in Wales; and when in 607 the battle of Chester thrust in a wedge between the Welsh and the Celts of Cumbria.

This continuous victory of invaders, who must at first have been in a small minority, is difficult to understand, though it finds its parallels in the story of the Goths and Franks. It is not to be explained by any supposed innate racial superiority of the Germans over the British; but chiefly by the loss of military training and habits in the British during the long Roman peace. The invaders—whom we shall henceforth speak of as English—showed by-and-by the same decadence that we noted in the Goths and the Vandals, and to a smaller extent in the Franks, and proved in their turn an easy prey to the Danes.

We have noticed how great a part is played by religion and the Church in the history of the Franks and the Goths. Their importance is not smaller in the history of the English. When they came they were pagans, and delighted in the sack of monasteries and the burning of churches. But northern paganism was everywhere yielding to Christianity. The English had, it seems, destroyed the Christian institutions from the territory that they occupied, though the old Celtic Christianity still held its own in Wales, in Scotland, and in Ireland, and made missionary expeditions into the lands of their conquerors. Without doubt there were Christians even among the English before the year 597, but in that year the mission came from Rome which was soon to make of the English ardent Christians, eager to carry their faith into their original German home. The evangelization of the English is connected with the name of Gregory the Great, who, it is said, was struck by the beauty of English slaves in the Roman market, and was moved to send the monk Augustine to convert a people of such great possibilities to the true faith. He landed in Kent and found a ready welcome, for the King of Kent, Ethelbert, was married to Bertha, a Frank and a Christian; she had Christian priests with her at Canterbury. It was through the influence of a woman that the Frankish king Clovis was turned to Christianity; but Ethelbert's conversion is purer in its origins than that of Clovis. Augustine was given permission to preach, and the new faith soon struck deep roots, and passed from one part of the country to another.



Edwin, the King of Northumbria, was converted in 627 ; but in Northumbria the Christian Church was brought face to face with a serious difficulty. The converts of Augustine were loyal to Rome, and followed in every way her example and her guidance. But the Celtic Christians, and those of the English who were converted by them, stood apart from this new movement in certain particulars. The presence of two separate church organizations in the island would have been a most serious thing. Religious differences in those days easily took on the tone of fanaticism, and long and furious civil war was often their result.

We have seen that Arianism was a strong contributory cause of the ruin of the Goths ; in Africa murderous struggles went on about religious differences that are to us meaningless. The Celtic Christians were separated from the English by details that seem trivial ; they kept Easter at a different date ; they were tonsured differently ; they had certain peculiarities of ritual. What underlay these points and made them serious was the antagonism of the two races. It was Oswy, King of Northumbria, who brought to an end this threat of danger. He called the priests of the two rival organizations into council in the Synod of Whitby (664). He heard the pleadings on both sides, and then decided in favour of the Roman usage, and he was strong enough to enforce the decision he had taken. From this time onwards the Church in England becomes a unity, and the growing political unity of the land owes much to the example and influence of the Church.

The Synod of Whitby was held 150 years after the arrival of the English. During this time the country had made political as well as religious progress. Soon after their arrival we see the English falling into seven main groups, which are called kingdoms. These were East Anglia, Essex, Kent, and Sussex, and—names which are far more important than the first four—Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex (the kingdom of the West Saxons). The history of England is summed up in the rivalries of these three, until the coming of the Danes brought a new and terrible force into the life of the island. Mercia

**Progress  
towards  
political  
unity.**

occupied the middle of England up to the Welsh border. Its great king was Penda, who for long maintained the cause of Paganism against the advancing power of Christianity. He gained two great victories against the Christian kings of Northumbria, but in 655 was himself defeated and slain by King Oswy. Northumbria, under a series of fine rulers, had identified itself with the new faith and gained by its victory. Then, and for the only time in the long history of our land, it was in the north that the centre of gravity was to be found both for politics and intellectual culture. York and the Ouse seemed as if they might play the part which destiny held in store

The greatness of Northumbria.

for London and the Thames. It was by Northumbrian armies that Penda was slain and paganism overthrown; the first of English poets was Caedmon of Whitby; the first and one of the greatest of English historians was Bede, a monk of Jarrow-on-Tyne; when Charlemagne wanted to introduce education among his rude Franks, it was in York that he found Alcuin, who proved the instrument that he needed. However, early states were even more unstable than modern ones, and the power of Northumbria soon passed away, and its place was taken by Wessex. It was by Wessex that the revived Mercian kingdom was defeated.

The supremacy of Wessex.

It was King Egbert who gained the decisive battle of Ellandune against the Mercians in 825, and he was a king the like of whom England had not seen up to that time. He had known Charlemagne well, and we can imagine that some of the political wisdom of the great Frank was reflected in Egbert's handling of the smaller problems of English politics. But those problems were not small, either in themselves or in their remote consequences. Out of Wessex came the modern British Empire, and it was already a great thing when Egbert made himself the overlord (or Bretwalda) over all the English and many of the Welsh.

## III

Egbert's England seemed to hold the promise of a great future. The English had shaken off their barbarism, and were well abreast of the culture of the rest of Europe; the Church was ready to give the Northmen guidance that it gave elsewhere; under the Wessex monarchy large advance had been made towards national unity. Egbert was doing on a smaller theatre the same sort of work that was done by Charlemagne in Central Europe. But legend tells us how Charlemagne wept when he saw the galleys of the Northmen sailing along the coasts of France. Before Egbert died in 839 these same invaders had begun in grim earnest their desolating attacks on the shores of England. We have seen something of the doings of the Norsemen in Europe already, and how their wanderings carried them to Iceland and to America, as well as to our islands, to France, to Sicily, and to Italy. They were a great race; terrible in battle; daring in the face of dangers of every kind; destined to shine in peace as well as in war. But they fell upon mediæval civilization while it was yet in its cradle and seemed likely to destroy it. They contributed most powerfully to the destruction of the empire that Charlemagne had built up, and Egbert's England was unable to maintain itself against them. They passed round the north of Scotland and fell upon Ireland, and for long wrought havoc there. The east coasts of England were most exposed to the fury of their attack. Northumbria in her weakness was an easy prey, and the towns and monasteries from Edinburgh to the Humber told by their ruins of the destruction that the Danes had wrought.

Wessex was a more strongly organized state, and offered a more stubborn resistance. But even Wessex suffered severely, and seemed likely to meet the same fate that had already fallen on Northumbria and Mercia. It was King Alfred and the Danes. King Alfred who saved Wessex—Alfred who holds the title of Great without challenge—and he saved more than Wessex. He saved English civilization, and gave to early

mediæval history its purest ruler and one of its greatest. It is true that England was destined to fall under Danish rule; but the work of Alfred postponed that fate until the Danes were Christians and partially civilized, and were ready to accept and to extend much of the work that Alfred had accomplished. Alfred was the fourth son of Ethelwulf, who had succeeded Egbert. His three brothers had had short and troubled reigns when he succeeded to the throne in 871, at the age of twenty-three. He faced the hitherto unconquered foe with new methods and soon with great success. In 871 he with his brother fought against them seven times, and induced them to accept terms and withdraw. Alfred used the precious interval to reorganize the forces of Wessex. When the Danes attacked again in 878 they at first carried all before them, but then Alfred defeated them in the great battle of Edington. It is one of the most important battles in English history, and holds the place for us which the great struggle and final victory of Charlemagne against the Saxons holds in German history. Guthrun, the leader of the Danes, agreed to retire from Wessex and the south-west of England and withdraw into the north-east, where he would still occupy the country that had once been Mercia and Northumbria. Also, after the fashion of the time which seems so strange to the twentieth century, it was one of the conditions of the peace that he should accept Christian baptism. This treaty—**The** usually known as the Treaty of Wedmore—marks **Treaty of** the passing of the Danish peril in its worst form. **Wedmore.** It is true that the Danes still held more than half of England—which was known as the Danelaw—and that by this means the Danes soon invaded again, and, finding no Alfred to resist them, conquered the whole land. But the Danes of the second era of the invasions were Christianized, and in part civilized, and were not the peril to the soul of the nation that they were in Alfred's time.

Alfred was much more than a successful fighter. He also organized the military and naval resources of Wessex as had never been done before. He built a navy, **Alfred's** which consisted of better ships than those which **work.** the Danes had used. He rearranged the native militia—

the fyrd—so that there was always a force ready for action. The victories of the Danes had been due in a large measure to the unpreparedness of the English ; but now for some time the power of aggression lay with the forces of Wessex. And yet Alfred's greatest claim to the praise of posterity is not to be found in the measures whereby he organized defence and victory. He stands supreme in his age for the value which he attached to education, to learning, and to religion. Even in this sketch we must not pass over in silence his labours for the better education of the clergy ; his building and restoration of churches ; his interest in voyages of discovery ; above all, the impetus he gave to literature in English by the translation of Latin works into the native tongue, and the inception of the English Chronicle, which is henceforth the most precious authority for our history.

For nearly a century after Alfred's death in 899 the kings of Wessex carried his work forward. His son Edward pushed hard at the Danish power in Mercia, East English victories over the Danes. Anglia, and Northumbria, and before his death in 924 he reigned over all the English population of the island. Then Athelstan, the son of Edward, defeated at Brunanburgh the effort of the Danes, in alliance with the Scots and the British, to recover their lost power. The next three reigns built higher the structure of English unity and power upon the basis of the authority of the royal house of Wessex. The glory of the house culminated in the reign of Edgar (959-975), which is almost as much the reign of Dunstan, abbot of Glastonbury and later Archbishop of Dunstan. Canterbury. The close alliance of Church and monarchy, which had done so much for the Saxon house in Germany, which during Edgar's reign reached the dignity of the Holy Roman Empire (Otto the Great was crowned emperor in 962) ; and which a little later was to lay the foundations of the royal house of France (for we shall see how closely the fortunes of the house of Capet are linked with those of the Church) ; that alliance is seen at its best in the co-operation of Dunstan and Edgar. Dunstan was enthusiastic for the reformation of the monastic life of England by a return to the rule of Saint Benedict, but he worked

indefatigably also for the unity of the realm and the advancement of the house of Wessex.

Edgar died in 975. The year marks the end of a really glorious century in our annals, and we should recognize its importance more generally if it had not been followed by a period of great humiliation and disaster. The causes of the collapse of the Wessex monarchy are difficult to determine. No states were stable in the early Middle Ages. What was achieved was the work of an enlightened few. The peoples were not taken into partnership; their time was not yet. Nearly everything depended on a few individuals, and thus civilization suffered from that instability, which in later ages we associate with absolute monarchies.

Ethelred, known as the King of ill-counsel, came to his father's throne in 978, and reigned for thirty-eight years. A large measure of the disasters of the time must be ascribed to him, for he showed none of the great qualities that we associate with the house of Wessex. But we must recognize that he was faced by a more dangerous foe than any that England had known since Alfred's great victory. The Danes attacked again, and they attacked now not in isolated or loosely allied bands, but with the whole force of a compact nation behind them. Denmark and Norway had settled down into two strong kingdoms, and, a little later, King Canute ruled over both of them. This was one of the few occasions when it seemed that the Scandinavian race might really play a decisive part in the politics of Europe; but their union did not last long, and it was only a close union that could give their thin population a position of importance.

For the third time our island knew the horrors of a cruel invasion. What the English had inflicted upon the Britons, what they had already suffered once from the Danes, that they suffered now at the hands of King Sweyn and his son Canute. The advance of the Danes towards civilization and religion was at first hardly perceptible, for we read of indiscriminate slaughter and the murder of Alphege, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Yet we must say in fairness that the Danish

cruelties are partly explained by a massacre of the Danes of England which had been brutally and foolishly ordered by Ethelred.

On Ethelred's death his son Edmund Ironside fought for a year with great valour against the Danish king, Canute. It seemed that again, as in Alfred's day, England would be divided between the English and the Danes. But Edmund died, and in 1017 Canute became king of all the English. The country accepted him without resistance. There was as yet very little national feeling. Canute's military power was already known, and soon he showed himself a wise and humane ruler.

Canute ruled over Norway, Denmark, and England. The Emperors had a wider territory, but did not at this time possess so powerful a military and naval force. Canute hoped to establish a great empire in his family. It was the size of his dominions, and the frequent journeys it entailed, which led to an important feature in his method of government. He made no attempt to overthrow the political system of England nor to subordinate it to Denmark; but he gave its great divisions, Northumbria, East Anglia, Mercia, and at last Wessex, into the hands of the great rulers who represented in their districts the royal power and were called Earls. It was probably wise and even necessary to decentralize power, but these great earldoms proved a great danger to the unity of the English nation, and led to the division of the forces of England, when the Norman William invaded our shores.

We must go forward to that invasion without more than a glance at the years which intervened between the death of Canute in 1035 and the battle of Hastings in 1066. The newly founded Danish power proved even more unstable than the Wessex monarchy. There was civil war at the death of Canute, and the division of his wide kingdom deprived it of its power of compelling obedience. The great Earls that Canute had established, and especially Godwin, Earl of Wessex, exercised a powerful influence. It was chiefly through the influence of Godwin that in 1012 Edward the Confessor, the son of Ethelred

Weakness  
of the  
govern-  
ment.

the Unready, was made king. He had no children, and was interested more in religion than in politics. The question of the succession was in men's minds during the whole of his reign.

There were many claimants for the prize, and their chances seemed not unevenly balanced. Edmund Ironside had left children; the royal house of Denmark naturally desired to take up the inheritance of Canute; <sup>The</sup> Godwin, Earl of Wessex, and his son Harold <sup>claimants</sup> clearly hoped to rise to the throne, and their <sup>to the</sup> succession. <sup>vigour</sup> and pure English blood gave them some right to hope. But beyond the English Channel, in Normandy, there had grown up, as we shall see in Chapter XIII., a vigorous power closely akin to that of the Danes but called Norman, nominally subordinate to the French king, but really independent, and now in the hands of William, soon to be known as the Conqueror. He could make out some sort of a claim to the English throne. The Confessor's mother was a Norman, and William asserted that the Confessor had promised to bequeath him the English Crown. A doubtful story was told that Harold, son of Godwin, had promised his support. It was at any rate undeniable that William was a fine and successful soldier, backed by a race as brave as the kindred Danes, but, owing to their long contact with the French, much more skilful in the arts of life and government. Why should not he win the English Crown as Canute had done?

The crisis came with the death of Edward the Confessor in 1066. Harold, the son of Godwin, was chosen and crowned king. He knew that he would have to fight hard <sup>The</sup> for his crown. First the Danish king, Harold <sup>Norman</sup> Hardrada, descended upon Yorkshire. King <sup>conquest of</sup> Harold, with the English army, marched north <sup>England.</sup> and defeated him at Stamford Bridge, near York. Whilst he was in the north news came that William the Norman had landed in Sussex. Harold came south with what speed he could. On October 14, 1066, the battle of Hastings was fought. William the Norman was henceforth William the Conqueror, and soon King of England.



## IV

We have seen how the Romans, the English, the Danes, and the Normans had in turn conquered our island. Since 1066 we have been more free than any country in Europe from foreign invasion. Very rarely has any foreign force landed : none has left any important or permanent traces on our development. The genius of the Norman and the sound organization of the native population are jointly responsible for this happy result.

William clearly saw the dangers that would threaten his power. These came from two sides. The English would long resent the victory of the foreigner, and would try by various expedients to overthrow him. On the other hand, William would have trouble from his own barons. They had followed him in a spirit of ambition and adventure. They had been promised estates from the conquered lands. William well knew from his experiences in Normandy—and from his own unruly behaviour towards his overlord the King of France—how rebellious was the temper of the race, and how ready they would be to resist the action of his government. It is strange that the second danger proved much more serious than the first. There were risings of the English, but they were never more than local and they were easily beaten down. Soon the English became reconciled to the new order of things, and this reconciliation is the basis on which the mediæval power of England rests.

To explain this feature we must remember that the country had undergone many invasions, and that William's rule must have seemed almost a continuation of that of Canute and the Danish dynasty. National feeling was very little developed. If the new government was strong, if it secured order and promoted the prosperity of the country, the English would not resent the use of the Norman tongue in their rulers more than they had resented the use of Danish. King William took care not to offend the English unnecessarily. His treatment of them offers many analogies with that of Canute. New institutions were introduced ; old ones were modified ; the estates of the nobles were

confiscated ; but the life of the ordinary man went on in much the old way. The national militia (the fyrd) was carefully preserved : the old courts were maintained. Everywhere, at first, Normans were supreme. But they had not come in sufficient numbers really to permeate English life. These proud conquerors showed, moreover, a curious willingness to accept the life and the ways and the language of the English among whom they lived : in much the same way as the Normans had accepted already much of the language and the culture of France, and later would blend with the Italians and the Sicilians and the Irish.

Far greater were the difficulties presented by the Norman barons who came over with William. The victory of the Normans gave a great impulse to the institutions of feudalism. There was already a strong trend in that direction, for feudalism was not a system of life and government, imposed from above, but rather the shape into which social and political life naturally fell, when the land was the only source of wealth and the central government was too weak to enforce its will against the great owners of land. Even before the Conquest, therefore, we can see some signs of the identification of sovereignty with the ownership of land ; of the holding of land on condition of military service ; of the small freeman sinking towards the condition of serfdom. But after the Conquest what had been vague and spontaneous became definite and systematic. Most of the English landowners were dispossessed of their lands, and these were transferred to Normans who were already well accustomed to the ideas and practices of feudalism. This rendered the transition to the new state of things much easier. The great lords, who were now usually called barons, held of the king and were tenants-in-chief ; they granted out such part of their lands as they did not care to manage themselves to others, who were vassals or sub-tenants. At the bottom of the social scale were men of various titles, but all tending to fall into the condition of serfdom. Now, according to the conditions of continental feudalism, each tenant gave his superior military service and was bound to follow his call to battle, as well as to submit all law cases

in which he was concerned to be tried in his feudal superior's courts. Thus each baron was a little sovereign, and fell little short of the powers of a sovereign state. Hence came the anarchy of feudalism, and the difficulty of establishing a stable government in a thoroughly feudalized state.

It was the great triumph of William that he managed to avoid this. He did not suffer at the hands of his barons what

**The repression of feudal anarchy.** the King of France had suffered at his own. By what measures did he win this notable success? First, as we have seen, he maintained and encouraged the military organization of the English

and their separate judicial courts. Next, in the division of the conquered lands he kept for the Crown so great a territory that his superiority over any of his barons was beyond challenge. Further, he avoided the massing of the lands of any particular Norman baron in one part of the country. His lands, on the contrary, were given him in parcels that were scattered in different parts of England. It will be seen at once how much this weakened the barons for attack and defence, and how it prevented them from becoming the representatives of the old local feeling of Mercia or East Anglia or any other part of England. It was only when the Welsh or the Scotch threatened the newly won territories of William that greater powers were given to certain barons by the establishment of certain counties palatine, in which the barons were granted large military and judicial powers. Such were Chester and Durham among others.

These were the general administrative arrangements of the great conqueror. Two more specific acts must be mentioned **Domesday Book.** which also tended to the control of the barons. In 1085 the inquiry into the condition of England was held, the results of which are known as Domesday Book. "So narrowly did he cause the survey to be made that there was not a single rood of land, nor was there an ox or a cow or a pig passed by that was not set down in his book." The great census was intended primarily for purposes of taxation, but it contributed in many ways to the strengthening of the Government. We know how essential the careful drawing up of statistics is to the efficient action of a modern government.

Then, in 1086, came the Moot and Oath of Salisbury. This cut deep into the traditions of feudalism, as known and practised on the Continent. It was the very basis of that system that a man must follow his feudal lord into the field against all comers. If a baron were at war with his king it was the recognized duty of the baron's tenants—a duty which the king himself would recognize—to fight against the king. But henceforth it should not be so in England. At Salisbury "all the land-owning men there were over all England" swore oaths of fealty to the king, whether they were tenants-in-chief or sub-tenants to any degree of sub-infeudation. Now, in case of a struggle between the king and his barons they were bound to follow the king, not their own feudal superior, and, if they broke their oath, the law had the heaviest penalties, of confiscation and death, against those who rebelled and failed.

William found, too, a valuable ally in the Church, which, as we have seen, was at this time gathering great strength from the Cluniac revival and the policy of Hildebrand. The papacy had supported William in his attack on England, and after his victory the ritual, the architecture, and the government of the Church were brought into harmony with what was usual in Normandy. Lanfranc, Prior of the Abbey of Bec, in Normandy, was made Archbishop of Canterbury, the Church was given separate ecclesiastical courts, and henceforth for a long time was reckoned one of the main supports of the English Crown.

The constitutional life of England is continuous beyond that of any country in Europe. It is therefore interesting to note, even in 1066, the early form of that institution which was to be the greatest of all parliaments and the model of most of them. In the pre-Conquest days there had been a council, called the Witan or Witenagemot, the assembly of wise men, without whose concurrence the king rarely performed any important act. It consisted of the nobles of the king and of the bishops. The Witenagemot of Edward the Confessor became the Great Council of William the Conqueror, for, as we have seen, the new king was conservative of the old forms. But now

The  
Moot of  
Salisbury.

The  
Conqueror  
and the  
Church.

Continuity  
of the  
English  
constitution.

there were called to this Great Council all the king's tenants-in-chief, including the great ecclesiastics who held their lands from him. It might thus have become a large and unwieldy body. But the poorer tenants-in-chief found it difficult to attend, and political power was not much desired at that time. In practice the Great Council consisted of the bishops, the great abbots, and the wealthy landowners of England.

## CHAPTER XIII

### The Rise of the French Monarchy

WE have followed the struggle between the papacy and the empire in order to bring into clearness the central thread of mediæval history. But while emperors and popes were struggling with one another, and Germany and Italy were suffering or profiting by their rivalry, great things were happening elsewhere in Europe. In England the unity of the nation had been achieved at an early date, and the country was advancing steadily towards strength and influence. In Spain, the contest which was to endure for centuries between the Mahomedan and the Christian powers, was in progress, and at last the scales began to incline in favour of the Christians. But the most important thing for European history was the development of the power and of the monarchy of France; for when the empire failed with Conradino, and the popes seemed to have won a final victory over their great antagonist, it was France which stepped into the position of Germany as the leading power in Europe; it was France which inherited the quarrel of the emperors against the popes; it was France which inflicted upon the papacy a terrible and irretrievable blow and revenged Frederick II. and Frederick Barbarossa. We now go back therefore three centuries in order to see what was happening west of the Rhine and Rhone, and specially what was the condition of things by the banks of the Seine.

We have seen that what we call France had formed part of the territories of Charles the Great; we have seen, too, how

at the Treaty of Verdun in 843, in the triple division of the territories of the great Charles, the district to the west of the Rhine and Rhone for the first time formed a kingdom by itself. We may say that the existence of France dates from the year 843, but for a century and a half its history is a troubled one. France after the treaty of Verdun.

It had suffered much more than the eastern half of Frankland from the attacks of the Northmen and of the Saracens, and the central government proved utterly incapable of maintaining the defence of the land. More completely, therefore, even than in Germany, feudalism developed unchecked. The central Government counted for little: the one all-important force in the country was that of the great landowners with their tenants and retainers grouped round them. The attacks of the Normans provide us with the chief thread which conducts us through this tangled, dreary period. In 885 they laid siege to the city of Paris itself, and the city would have fallen if its fate had depended only upon the energy of the king. But what the king failed to do, a great nobleman succeeded in doing. Odo, Count of Paris, drove off the enemy, and for this service he was shortly afterwards elected king. The settlement of Normandy, 911. In 911 the Norman invasions were practically brought to an end by the cession of the rich

territory which lay either side of the lower course of the Seine to the terrible invaders. This district is henceforth known as Normandy, and the dukes of Normandy, though they ruled in their duchy as practically independent powers, nevertheless recognized the kings of France as having a vague feudal pre-eminence over them. But again for many years after this, the history of the monarchy of France shows us nothing but weakness, and the kings were little more than the titular heads of the State. Side by side with the kings of France were the great nobles of whom the chief were the rulers of Flanders, Champagne, Normandy, Burgundy, Aquitaine and Toulouse; and each of these men seems to possess a power equal to that of the king, and it seemed little likely that the royal power would ever succeed in reducing them to subjection.

A great event—or rather an event which ultimately produced a great consequence—came in 987. In that year, Hugh

Capet was appointed king. He had previously been ruler of Paris and the surrounding region, and possessed a feudal territory which was not one of the largest, but was compact and strong. All the kings of France, from this time until France had no kings at all, were descendants from this prince. Yet at the time there seemed little to show that a new era had begun. The significance of the event lies in the fact that between Hugh Capet and the Church there was a close alliance. When a century later the Church fought against the empire, it was at the same time throwing all its weight upon the side of the new King of France. And then, next, Hugh Capet was himself an important and powerful feudal chief. It was therein that his power lay, not in his empty royal title. But he and his successors put his feudal power at the service of the crown, and little by little the authority of the crown was advanced until the feudal chieftains were beaten down, and the monarchy was made the one supreme institution without rival and almost without check, in the whole land. That is the great fact in the political history of France, and must be looked at a little further. Hugh Capet, at his election, possessed certain territories lying between the Somme and the Loire, and containing the important cities of Paris and Orleans. Over these he ruled directly; these were, in the language of the time, his "demesne." Outside of this demesne, the great nobles had their estates over which they ruled with almost absolute power, while they gave to the king only a very limited obedience and rendered him occasional service. During the course of the next three centuries the kings of France, by various means extended the royal demesne and encroached upon the feudal territories of the nobles until the whole of France was royal demesne, and there were no real feudal nobles left in the old sense of the word; all Frenchmen thus became in a real sense the subjects of the kings, and the nobles, though they retained their old wealth and much of their old possessions, were, nevertheless, without question, subjected to the royal authority. It is a long road that will lead us to this goal, but it will help

**Accession of Hugh Capet.**

**Its importance.**

**The French monarchy and feudalism.**

us to understand the road if we realize clearly what the goal will be.

The first king in whose reign we see clearly the development of the monarchy, is Philip I. (1060-1108). Two events during the course of this long reign contributed indirectly to the advance of the crown. First, in 1066, Philip I. William, Duke of Normandy, the dangerous neighbour and the most powerful subject of the kings of France, invaded and conquered England. This conquest, no doubt, Norman enormously increased William's importance, but Conquest it also removed the centre of his power away of England. from France across the Channel; and though it made him for a time, an even more dangerous neighbour, it ultimately made possible the absorption of his French possessions in the royal demesne. Next, in 1095, the first crusade was preached at Clermont, and a vast force poured out The First, by various routes to the Holy Land. In this Crusade. first crusade the French played by far the most important part, and the King of France saw a large number of his most powerful and unruly subjects depart, many of them never to return, and their absence allowed him thus to strengthen his position against that of the feudal leaders. We may pass over the next reign and come to that of Louis VII. (1137-1180). It is in externals a somewhat inglorious and even unfortunate reign. He was Louis VII. unwise enough to join in the second crusade, and and it brought upon him nothing but defeat and loss, Aquitaine. and apparently more serious loss came upon him in France itself. He had married, by his father's arrangement, Eleanor of Aquitaine, the heiress of the greatest of the feudal powers of the south of France, and it seemed that in this way a vast and permanent addition had been made to the royal territories. But then there came a quarrel between the King and Queen, and Louis VII. persisted in getting the marriage dissolved on the ground that he was related to his wife Henry II. "within the prohibited degrees." The territories marries of Aquitaine were thus for the time lost to Eleanor of Aquitaine. the crown, which was bad, but it was worse Aquitaine. that after the divorce, Eleanor of Aquitaine was married to



Henry II., the great King of England. Henry was already possessed of the territories of Normandy and Anjou, and he now came into possession of those of Aquitaine, and thus possessed a power in France very much larger, and apparently very much stronger than that which yielded direct allegiance to the King of France himself, though it must be remembered that for all his lands in France, Henry II. yielded a nominal allegiance to the French king. But though the French crown made no external progress in the reign of Louis VII., those forces were already maturing which were ultimately to give the crown its great triumph. Briefly, these are the points to be noted: the machinery of Government was more carefully organized than it had been; all authority centred in the royal court which came now to consist not merely of great nobles, but of ecclesiastics and lawyers who rendered the king unquestioning service. At the same time, there was springing up upon the royal demesne a large number of new towns (*villes nouvelles*) which were peopled by traders, and often by serfs who found there refuge from the tyranny of ecclesiastical or feudal masters. Both these tendencies were developed much further at a later time. We need only point out that in the reign of Louis VII. the crown was already in close alliance with the Church and the middle classes, and it is on these supports that it was ultimately carried forward to victory.

Louis VII. was succeeded in 1180 by Philip II., who is usually known as Philip Augustus, and mediæval France owed Philip Augustus. probably more to him than to any other of her rulers. He enormously added to the royal demesne as the result of a series of wars. The great territory that had been built up by Henry II. of England was ruled by his weak son John, and Philip fought against John with success. We need only recall how Normandy was overrun by the French, and how, in 1214, when John joined himself with the emperor Otto IV., Philip Augustus found a warm supporter in the papacy, and gained against his enemies the decisive battle of Bouvines. There are few more important battles in European history than this; it gave the Imperial crown to Frederick II., whose career we have already

**Battle of  
Bouvines,  
1214.**

noted ; it gave England Magna Charta ; and it assured to the French crown the possession of the Norman and Angevin territories of the English royal house. But Philip II. gained other victories only a little less important than this. In the north and in the east, as well as in the west and centre, by conquest and inheritance large territories were annexed by the crown. Whereas the King of France, a few years before, had seemed only to be one and perhaps not the most powerful among a number of feudal chiefs, the kings were now by their own personal possessions in a position to struggle with success against all feudal rivalries.

But while the territory of the crown increased, the machinery of Government was also skilfully elaborated. The alliance with the Church was maintained in spite of sharp friction at certain periods, and the alliance with the middle classes was carried still further. **Encour-  
agement of  
the middle  
class.** No king of France ever gave charters to so many towns as Philip Augustus ; he encouraged trading associations and allowed a certain measure of self-government. Paris itself was by far the greatest of the towns of France, and in size, in wealth, and in importance it gained immensely from the policy of Philip Augustus. But further, Philip gave the crown of France the weapons by which its future conquests were to be won ; for he gave it regular officials ; he gave it money ; he gave it an efficient army. The regular officials **The new  
royal  
officials.** were dependent upon the royal court, and were only a development of what had gone before, but the development was a large one ; the nobility were pushed away from the service of the crown, which chose its chief agents among men of the middle classes. New officials known as *baillis* were sent down into the provinces of the royal demesne there to represent the royal authority, and to maintain it against all rivals. The king, too, secured a full exchequer, partly through the vast extension **New  
sources of  
revenue.** of the royal demesne which we have already noticed, partly by substituting direct payment for various feudal services. The Jews, too, were patronised, and had to pay for the royal patronage, and means were found of inducing the clergy themselves to contribute. The army which Philip

used was not, as a rule, the usual feudal levy. He formed an army of men directly recruited and directly paid by himself, which was far more trustworthy than the forces contributed by his feudal dependents could possibly be. A French writer has thus summed up the great success of his reign:—"The royal demesne was stretched up to the frontiers of the realm. The royal authority was enforced up to those frontiers. Victory had been won against feudalism, England and the empire combined. The dynasty had been established upon solid foundations. France had been founded."

After Philip, his son Louis VIII. reigned for three years, and then in 1226 his grandson, Louis IX., succeeded and reigned until 1270. Louis IX. is usually and rightly known as Saint Louis, and we see in him a type of mediæval catholicism at its very best. He may, indeed, be compared to St. Francis, though the one sat upon the most powerful throne in Europe, and the other was pledged to the life of a beggar. In both of them the influence of religion was paramount, and was allowed to guide their every action, without discussion and without resistance. St. Louis devoted a large part of every day to the services of the Church; he refused fine apparel, and rich living; he rejoiced in performing the most menial occupations, provided that the Church enjoined them. Especially, he was often known to wash the feet of beggars, and of the sick, nor did he shrink from them though they were covered with loathsome and dangerous sores. But the religious life in him was associated with great sweetness, joy, and humanity. He is not indeed free from that taint of religious persecution which was then common everywhere by the Catholic Church throughout the whole period of its domination; but there is less of the persecuting spirit in him than in almost any other prominent religious figure of the Middle Ages, and the beauty of his character and of his life was the best recommendation of the faith in which he so ardently believed. It is important to notice, however, that the saintliness of St. Louis did not prevent him from being really a great ruler. He was anxious

to be just to all men ; he was especially anxious to serve the best interests of the Church ; but he was equally determined that others should yield its just rights to the crown, and he would not permit the Church itself to encroach upon what he believed to be his own rightful prerogative. He was anxious to convince the feudal nobles of France, that their privileges would be safe from any encroachment at his hands. But when, in 1242, the great nobles of Flanders, Brittany, Burgundy, Gascony, and Languedoc joined in an attempt to overthrow him, they found in him a vigorous and determined antagonist, and they were overthrown at the battle of Saintes. This has been taken by some as marking the final overthrow of French feudalism ; never again was there any noble in France who could treat with the crown on terms of equality, and although the crown had in future much trouble and contention with its nobles, their resistance never again rested upon the old feudal basis, nor was it ever again likely to secure a decided advantage. He showed, too, a good deal of independence in his dealings with the papacy, and was unwilling to sacrifice anything of the royal power. The most serious charge against him in this relation, is that he introduced the Inquisition into France, for he was as anxious as the popes themselves to repress and extirpate heresy, and the Inquisition was destined to have an evil influence not only upon the lives and thoughts of Frenchmen, but also upon the organization and the law of the monarchy of France. He became recognized as distinctly the first power in Europe. He was appealed to during the course of the Barons' War in England to decide between the combatants, and no one disputed the honesty of his verdict, though it failed to establish a durable peace. We have already seen how, towards the end of his reign, his brother Charles of Anjou became King of Sicily and Naples, and though he was in this position quite independent of France, his promotion no doubt tended to raise the prestige of the French Crown.

One division of the activity of the king will be noted in another chapter. He was the last of the genuine crusaders. Twice he went on crusading expeditions ; on the first occasion

he landed in Egypt, and after an early success, suffered a complete overthrow. On the second occasion he embarked upon an unwise expedition against Tunis, and upon his arrival there, perished from plague with a large portion of his army.

It is important to follow the development of the constitutional machinery of France during his reign. It was, indeed, St. Louis who created the engine of government which was to be used by his grandson Philip IV., to establish what may fairly be called tyranny in France, and to humiliate the papacy for which St. Louis held so profound a veneration. Again, we must note that the king's court is the all-important power. The free institutions which existed in France were of little importance, nor were they destined to anything like the development which ultimately created parliamentary government in England. We have already seen how the king's court had driven out or subordinated the feudal nobles, and was formed chiefly of clerks and lawyers. In the time of St. Louis we see the king's court adopting a special formation for dealing with special subjects. We begin to see the establishment of a Royal Council for the consideration of foreign affairs and general policy. We see quite distinctly a Chamber of Accounts, which was technically the king's court acting for financial purposes, and which contained those members of the king's court who had special knowledge or aptitude. More important still, we see in this reign the clear beginnings of the Parlement of Paris. This was, to begin with, another phase of the royal court, and it consisted of those members of the court who were specially suited for judicial work. The Parlement was divided into various chambers, but its organization need not here be considered in detail. It is enough to see in it a great royal court of justice, and to note that legislation, which we connect so closely with the English parliament, was no part of the duties of the parlement of Paris. It acted as a court of appeal for all within the royal demesne. More important still, it acted as an instrument for maintaining the rights of the crown against the claims of the feudal nobles, and even

for encroaching upon the privileges of the nobles in the interests of the crown. It was maintained that a large number of the cases which hitherto had fallen within the competence of the feudal courts really belonged to the king's courts; they were claimed as royal cases (*cas royaux*), and as such were taken away from feudal courts and brought before the Parlement. In all early history, judicial procedure is one of the chief agencies of government. In England the itinerant judges of Henry I. and Henry II. were specially organized for the maintenance of the rights of the crown: this function was performed in France by the Parlement. It holds a very high place among those forces which overthrew feudalism and established the monarchy as the one supreme and unrivalled institution in France.

During the reign of St. Louis a process was nearly completed whereby a vast territory of the utmost value came into the hands of the crown. To understand this, we must go back for a moment, and in a few sentences sketch one of the most interesting episodes of the thirteenth century.

The south of France was one of the richest and most cultivated territories in Europe; it was the home of poetry and of the Troubadours; its towns were rich and flourishing, and the castles of the great and small nobles were centres of refinement, of luxury, and sometimes of vice. In this district, at the beginning

Religious  
condition  
of Southern  
France.

of the thirteenth century, religious movements of a strange kind had made their appearance on the western slopes of the Alps, and in what is called Provence. The movement that was strongest in the east was that of the Waldensians, who advocated a return to primitive Christianity, and protested against many of the doctrines as well as against the pomp and ceremony of the Catholic Church. Further to the west, round the city of Toulouse, in the district that was known as Languedoc, those views of religion and life were to be found which are usually known as Albigensian, from the little town of Albi.

The Albi-  
gensian  
movements.

Under this one name, several varieties of view were included. It seems that the germs of these heresies had been brought by various channels from the East, and that for the

most part the heretics asserted the existence, not of a single God, but of two rival and almost equal powers of good and evil. Various practical consequences were deduced from this. Some held that a life of the strictest morality was necessary for them; others found in these views an excuse for plunging into every kind of vice. The great power in Languedoc was Raymond, Count of Toulouse, who lived in great splendour, but with a license that reminded men of what was to be found among Mahomedan rulers. His own views were indefinite; he declared himself later a convinced adherent of the Catholic Church; but certainly the heretics found favour at his Court.

The matter was brought to a head in 1208 by the murder of a papal emissary called Peter de Castelnau. Innocent III., the reigning Pope, preached a crusade against the heretics of Languedoc, and declared that those who fought against them would enjoy the same privileges as if they went to the Holy Land. The chief agent in this crusade was Simon de Montfort, the father of the man who played such a conspicuous part in the foundation of English parliamentary institutions. Under his guidance the crusade assumed features of horrible barbarity. We read of towns that were wholly destroyed without regard to guilt or innocence, age or sex; we read of the ferocious crusaders preparing for their work of indiscriminate bloodshed by the singing of hymns to the Holy Ghost. The Count of Toulouse was unable to resist the armies that poured upon his lands, and even after he procured the alliance of his neighbour, the King of Aragon, it fared no better with him. The battle of Muret in 1213 took from him his last hope of victory.

The crusade had been directed against the Count of Toulouse who was a feudal subject of the King of France, but the King of France had played no part in it; the moving force has come from the Pope, Innocent III., and in justice to him it must be said that he had in the end protested, though in vain, against the bloodshed and the torture that were employed. But though the King of France took no part in the war at first, it was to him that all the profit came. (The

The gains  
of the  
French  
Monarchy  
in the  
South of  
France.

French monarch had become so great that when any feudal power within the frontiers of France was broken up, the fragments were inevitably drawn into the orbit of the greater power. The chief stages whereby the territories of Toulouse became the demesne of the Crown of France are as follows : Simon de Montfort died in 1218, having seized the lands of the Count of Toulouse and introduced into them the northern nobles who had followed him in the war. But soon the population, exasperated by the oppressive rule of men whom they regarded as foreigners, rose in rebellion on behalf of the son of the Count of Toulouse ; and the war entered on a second phase. Amaury de Montfort, Simon's son, conscious of his inability to hold the lands which his father had won, ceded them to the King of France, Louis VIII., who succeeded Philip Augustus, in 1223. The war then became clearly one for the acquisition of a vast territory by the French Crown. Louis VIII. died before the end was reached ; but in 1229 Blanche of Castille concluded on behalf of her son Louis IX. the treaty of Meaux (1229). By this treaty it was arranged that certain rich territories immediately to the west of the Rhone were to come at once into the hands of the king. It was further arranged that the daughter of the Count of Toulouse, his only child and heiress, should be married to the brother of the French king. When he died in 1247 without heir, the whole of these rich territories came into the royal possession, which consequently stretched continuously from the German Ocean to the Mediterranean.

France is peculiarly rich in histories in which a single author has told the whole story of the land from the beginning to the present day. The chief of these are those by Martin, Michelet, Sismondi, Dareste. All these are in many volumes : the short and brilliant history of Lavallée (six smaller volumes) deserves mention. All earlier histories of France have been to some extent superseded by a series of volumes, written by various authors under the direction of Lavissee. Hutton's *Philip Augustus*, and Perry's *Saint Louis*, are short and useful biographies. The *Life of Saint Louis*, by Joinville, is an interesting chronicle, and has often been translated. Tout's *Empire and Papacy* is valuable for French history. The institutions of France may be studied in Gasquet's *Institutions Politiques de la France*. The best histories of France in English are those by Kitchin (3 vols.), and an excellent summary by W. H. Jarvis, revised by Hassall, called the *Student's France*.



## CHAPTER XIV

## The Catastrophe of the Mediæval Church

WE have seen how victory crowned the struggle of the popes against the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire. Henry IV., Frederick Barbarossa and Frederick II. had all suffered humiliation at the hands of the papacy; the descendants of Frederick II. had been defeated, and the race extinguished, and the rich territories of Naples and Sicily had passed by papal grant into the hands of a French prince. Now we have to see how, shortly after this crowning triumph, the papacy came to blows with the royal house of France to which it was bound by so many mutual services, and how in this struggle it suffered a sudden and irretrievable disaster.

In this new struggle the papacy found itself without effective friends of any kind. Germany lay prostrate and divided, incapable of effort as a whole, and not likely to render services to a power from which it had suffered so much. Not much was to be expected from the French house which had received at the Pope's hands the south of Italy and Sicily; for Sicily, exasperated by the oppression of the French, had risen against them, massacred a great number of them in what is known as the Sicilian Vespers, and transferred the crown to the house of Aragon (1282). The cities of Italy which had served the Pope so well in the past saw no longer any reason to continue their alliance, now that all danger from the emperors had disappeared. Further, it seems plain that at the beginning of the fourteenth century there was a decline in religious enthusiasm and in devotion to the papacy. There was no new monastic movement, no new mendicant order: the old monasteries were inert and the orders of the Franciscans and the Dominicans were weakened by internal quarrels, and had fallen away from their early ideals. The use which the popes

had made of spiritual weapons, such as excommunication, interdict, and the preaching of crusades, for purposes of private gain, or even of personal revenge, had certainly weakened the influence and blunted the edge of those weapons.

At the end of the thirteenth century the papal throne was occupied by one who maintained the claims of Gregory VII. and Innocent III. to the utmost. This was Pope Boniface VIII. who came to the papal throne in 1294. Before his election he was thought to be a friend of France, but after his election he pursued the aggrandizement of the Catholic Church, and consequently his own, without regard to former connections. He maintained the claims of the papacy to superiority over all crowned heads in the most direct way. "God has established us above all kings and emperors that we may in His name pull up and destroy, bring to nothing and disperse, or build and plant." Such were the words that he used in 1301, and later, in a more famous Bull, he declared that to the papacy were to be applied the words of the prophet: "I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms." He declared that if the earthly power erred it was to be judged by the spiritual power, but if the spiritual power erred it could be judged by God alone. In 1300 there was held a great Jubilee at Rome, and an immense influx of people thronged into the Eternal City. The Pope seems to have been carried away by the enthusiasm which was displayed. He is said to have claimed that he possessed the two swords—that is, the temporal power as well as the spiritual—and to have presented himself to the people in the robes both of emperor and of pope. Such a man holding such views was bound to come into conflict with the temporal powers of Europe in proportion to their strength. It was inevitable, therefore, that he should soon find across his path the royal house of France, hitherto the strongest supporter of the Catholic Church, but now, since the overthrow of the house of Hohenstaufen, the occupant of the leading position in Europe.

Philip IV. came to the throne of France in 1285. The policy of his reign was throughout vigorous, unscrupulous, and cruel; especially it attacked the Pope with a direct brutality

such as had never before been shown in the history of the Church. But we know little of the character of the king himself, and his actions seem to have been guided by his chief ministers. Of these the most important are, Pierre Flotte for the early part of the reign, and Nogaret for the later part. These men were both of the middle class, separated from the feudal aristocracy by birth and by interest, but well-versed in those principles of Roman law which had now come into such vogue, and which declared the authority of the king to be supreme above all rivals. The reign of Philip IV. in France has some close analogies with that of Henry VIII. in England, and Flotte and Nogaret have a certain similarity to the agents of the Tudor monarchy—to Empson and Dudley, and, above all, to Thomas Cromwell. The influence of Roman Law was doubtless one of the strongest forces during the whole reign. Another was the need of money. The machinery of the monarchy had much developed of late, it was requiring a larger income, and this necessitated a heavier taxation. In his anxiety the king had recourse to the dangerous and dishonest expedient of debasing the coinage, and of issuing gold and silver coins containing less of the precious metal than they professed to contain.

The chief semi-independent feudal powers which were now left in France were, Brittany, Guenne, and Flanders. It was the last which especially attracted the envious eyes of the king. It was a land rich in manufactures, full of towns bursting with industrial and political activity, almost independent in the management of their affairs, and beginning already to distinguish themselves in the domain of art. The cities of Flanders and the Netherlands were for northern Europe what the communes of Italy were for the south; and the kings of France were destined to find in Bruges and Ghent an antagonism as serious as the Emperor Frederick I. had found in Milan and Brescia. A quarrel with the Count of Flanders arising out of the French king's need of money led to war, and in 1300 the Count yielded before an invasion of the royal armies, and all Flanders was for the moment annexed to the royal demesne. But the citizens of Flanders soon found their municipal liberties

and activities curtailed or repressed by the royal authority; they were not accustomed to yield obedience to any one, and in 1302 an insurrection came, not of the Count, but of the people against the royal authority. The royal army marched into Flanders, confident of its power to overwhelm the burghers who had so

**Revolt of Flanders after annexation.**

daringly challenged it. They found the Flemish army drawn up near Courtrai, and with rash confidence the French knights spurred forward to the attack. The commons of Flanders had, however, skilfully protected their position by a canal, and in the confused struggle which followed, the chivalry of France suffered an entire defeat.

**Battle of Courtrai (1302).**

Pierre Flotte was himself among the slain. For the moment, Flanders was abandoned: later, another French army was collected, the country was invaded and the honour of the French armies was to some extent avenged at the battle of Mons-en-Puelle. But the resistance of Flanders was far from broken, and the king accepted a peace, whereby the greater part of Flanders remained independent under the nominal rule of its Count, though a small stretch in the south passed into the hands of the French king.

**Final arrangement with Flanders.**

While the war with Flanders was in progress, the king was already engaged in a more important conflict with the Pope. Its first stage was in 1299, when in answer to an attempt of the king to tax the clergy of France, the Pope issued a Bull known as *clericis laicos*, forbidding the clergy to pay taxes to any lay power. The king or his ministers answered the Bull by refusing to allow any money to pass out from France into Italy; the Pope was thus deprived of valuable revenues from the Church in France, and soon withdrew from the position which he had taken up and made peace with the French king.

**The Bull "clericis laicos."**

The struggle was renewed before long. Some sort of struggle was unavoidable between popes who thought as Boniface VIII., and kings who possessed the power and pursued the ends of Philip IV. of France. The next phase in the struggle is connected with Bernard, Bishop of Pamiers. He was opposed to the new ecclesiastical arrangements which had been made in

**The question of the trial of the Bishop of Pamiers.**

the south of France in consequence of the annexation of Toulouse, and especially he was at variance with the new Bishop of Toulouse. He was accused of plotting against the life of Philip IV., was arrested, and was placed upon his trial.

**The methods of Nogaret.** We see here, and in all the events that followed, the hand of the king's chief minister, Nogaret, who was skilful and wholly unscrupulous in poisoning public opinion by bringing charges of the foulest kind against those whom he wished to destroy. So constantly did he pursue this plan, not only with regard to the Bishop Bernard, but later with regard to the Pope, and later still with regard to the Templars, that it is impossible to distinguish truth from falsehood, and it is wise to suspect the foundation on which the wild charges of the time rested.

The Pope demanded that Bishop Bernard should be tried in Rome, and declared that the lay courts had no jurisdiction over an ecclesiastic. The legal question at issue was the same as that which had thrown England into confusion in the reign of Henry II., when Thomas Becket claimed for all clerics immunity from the ordinary courts of the realm. Fierce papal Bulls were met by fierce answers from the side of the king and his agents, and in 1299 the Pope in his Bull *Unam sanctam*, declared that it was "altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff." It was a contest not unlike that between Henry IV. and Gregory VII., but it was to be waged in a much fiercer mood, and by different weapons, and was to be brought to a different issue. Nogaret devised a plan of the greatest daring. He proposed to enter into relations with the Pope's private enemies in and near Rome, to attack the Pope himself and gain possession of his person, to bring him as a criminal before a general council which the King of France was to summon, and thus to force the papacy to recede from the position which it had taken up with regard to its authority over secular powers. In pursuit of this plan, in the year 1303, Nogaret joined the retainers of the Colonnas in Rome. The Pope was in his castle at Anagni, a few miles out of Rome. Nogaret and the Colonnas penetrated with an armed force

into the town and forced their way into the Pope's presence, A contemporary Italian chronicler thus describes the scene : " Pope Boniface hearing the uproar and seeing himself forsaken by all his cardinals . . . caused himself to be robed in the mantle of Saint Peter and, with the crown of Constantine on his head, and with the keys and the cross in his hand, he seated himself upon the papal chair. And when Colonna and the others, his enemies, came to him, they mocked at him with vile words, and arrested him and his household, which remained with him." The rumour was even circulated that the aged Pope, Christ's vicar, standing in full pontifical dress, had been struck in the face by the mailed fist of Colonna. The stories widely current to the discredit of the life and character of Boniface were forgotten and his sufferings only recalled. Dante was the enemy of Boniface, and yet he speaks in his great poem with awe of the outrage : " Christ," he says, " had been again crucified among robbers ; and the vinegar and gall had been again pressed to his lips."

Assault on  
Boniface  
VIII. at  
Anagni.

It did not seem at first as though Nogaret's scheme would be successful. A popular rising liberated Boniface VIII. The old man, however (he was in his 80th year), soon afterwards died, and Nogaret pressed forward unscrupulously to win a further victory for his master. The next Pope, Benedict II., was not sufficiently amenable to the pressure which the French put upon him. But he soon died, and in 1305, Clement, Bishop of Bordeaux, was elected Pope as Clement V. Before his election there had been negotiation between him and the King of France, and though its exact nature can never be known, it is certain that he had promised to serve the French king's purposes. Whether as a result of that promise or not, he established the residence of the Pope in Avignon, and removed the papal court from Rome. Avignon belonged to the papacy, but it was geographically in France, and actually within the power of the French king. The authority of the popes had depended so much upon their independence of any secular power that it is a matter of immense moment that now for some seventy years the popes

Death of  
Boniface  
VIII. Be-  
ginning  
of the  
Babylonish  
captivity.

were in such a position that all Europe saw in them the pliant agents of the French crown. It is this subservience to France, with all that flowed from it, which is the chief feature of that residence of the popes at Avignon, which is known in history as the "Babylonish captivity."

Events soon threw light on the promises which the Pope had made to the king before his election. The king was reconciled to the Church: even his agents were forgiven the violence that they had used against the person of the Pope; and soon there came in France a famous assault upon the order of the Templars.

The Knights Templars had been founded in 1118 as a result of the first crusade, and their duty was to assist and protect pilgrims to the Holy Land. But, as we have already seen, the Mahomedan tide had surged back again and destroyed the weakly rooted Christian states of the East, and the military orders had no longer foothold in Palestine. The knights of St. John still held out in Rhodes, but the Knights Templars were no longer engaged in the struggle against the infidel. There were some fifteen thousand of them in all, of whom a third resided in France. Amidst much that is doubtful concerning them it is clear that they were very rich, that they rivalled the Jews as bankers and money-lenders, and that their lives showed, as was natural, a great falling away from the strict principles which they professed. But beyond

**Charges against the Templars.** these charges for which there is sufficient evidence, other wild charges were brought against them about which it is difficult to judge. They were accused of having adopted the religious beliefs of the East; they were accused of denying Christ and of spitting upon His image; they were accused of the foulest personal vices. No certainty is procurable here, but it must be remembered that these charges are brought against them by their enemies who were anxious to find an excuse for their spoliation, and even for their murder, and it seems reasonable, as well as charitable, to believe that there is little or no foundation for these views. They were arrested; they were tried in Paris, and the Pope in vain demanded that the trial should be transferred to the Papal

Court. In 1310, fifty-four of them were burnt in Paris, and then pressure was put upon the Pope to induce him to abolish the whole order. Unwillingly he consented: the order was abolished, its property confiscated to the crown, but even this did not prevent the burning of the master of the Templars, Jacques de Molay. **Their execution and spoliation.** It was said that from the midst of the flames he summoned the king and pope to appear with him before the throne of God.

Constitutionally, the reign of Philip IV. carries forward and develops the methods of Philip II. and of St. Louis. Parlement was carefully organized and became more clearly than before the agent of the crown in all its efforts to win supreme power. During the struggle with the papacy, the germs of a new institution appeared which was destined to have a great name, and to play occasionally an important part in the history of France. Philip IV., like our own Henry VIII., under similar circumstances, wanted the support of his people in his struggle with the Catholic Church; and in 1302, there was called together for the first time a body known as the "States-General," consisting of the three orders or "estates" of the realm—the clergy, the nobility, and the commons. **Constitutional history of Philip IV.'s reign** **The States-General.** They met in these three separate groups, and they did little more than express their approval of the policy of the king, and of the arguments by which he supported his claims against the Pope. We shall see how in future reigns, especially at times of great crisis, this institution of the States-General emerges again. It was a body as fairly representative of France as the contemporary parliament was representative of England; and, upon certain occasions it exercised great power and claimed a control over France greater than the Houses of Parliament possessed in England; but it was not destined, like the English parliament, to become the basis of the political life of France. The causes of its failure are manifold: we need only notice here that its roots were not struck deep down into the ordinary life and habits of the people as was the case in England. It was a royal expedient to meet a sudden



emergency, and there was in the whole history of the States-General—down to the time when in 1789 it became the instrument for the overthrow of the royal power—a weakness which reminds us of its origin. The really important institutions in France were those which emanated from the royal court, not those which sprang from the choice of the people.

The histories of France all give much attention to the reign of Philip IV. Michelet's treatment of the reign deserves special mention. There are interesting documents relating to the struggle with the Papacy translated in Henderson's *Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*. Villani's *Chronicles*, translated in abridgment by Miss Rose Selfe, are of much interest and value for the period.

## CHAPTER XV

### Feudal Society

FEUDALISM is a word loosely used to cover a form of society existing over a large part of the surface of Europe for many centuries. (Its roots may be found in the time of **Extent and duration of** the Roman Empire; it took definite shape in **feudalism.** the ninth century, and it did not quite disappear from Western Europe until the end of the eighteenth century. It was thus an important feature of European life for nearly a thousand years. It extended also over a very wide area. It lay at the foundation of the life and institutions of Great Britain, though it was always restrained from full growth in our island by the strength of the monarchy; France and Germany were the countries where it could be seen in its freest development; it was important in Spain and Italy; and though Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, and Russia were not technically feudal countries, they exhibited some of the characteristics of feudalism in a striking manner, and retained them when they had died out elsewhere in Europe.

In the attempt, made in this chapter, to bring out some of the main features of feudal society we will think chiefly of the thirteenth century, and draw most of our illustrations from France.

Feudalism, and the society that went along with it, are usually described in legal phraseology derived from Latin or early French. Its institutions thus come to have an artificial appearance, as though they were the work of lawyers who imposed a system of their invention upon Europe. But feudalism was in fact a spontaneous development, the result of the forces, needs and ideas of the time. The institutions and practices were in existence before lawyers gave Latin names to them. No attempt can be made here to discuss the origin of feudalism; but it may be well to recall the saying of J. S. Mill that "government is always either in the hands, or passing into the hands, of whatever is the strongest power in society, and what this power is does not depend on institutions, but institutions on it." Among the forces which influenced its growth the following may be noted.

**Feudalism  
a spon-  
taneous  
growth.**

Feudalism is the negation of central government and administration; and in the ninth and tenth centuries the governments of Europe were weak and ineffective. The Roman Empire had collapsed. Charlemagne's effort to establish an efficiently administered state had failed immediately after his death. And we have seen how the attacks of the Northmen and the Magyars had broken down the feeble governments which faced them in France and Germany.

**Feudalism  
the nega-  
tion of  
central  
government.**

Feudalism is marked by the rendering of certain personal services where the modern world makes money payments. The Middle Ages were without a sufficient supply of coined money, and they knew nothing of the methods, such as notes and cheques, whereby the supply of coined money is now so largely supplemented. There was little capital in the Middle Ages, and when capital began to be a force it was always hostile to feudalism.

**Personal  
service  
instead of  
money pay-  
ments.**

In early civilization tradition is more important than the

stipulation of written law, and feudalism shows us custom and tradition controlling society with scanty reference to law, reason, or utility.

The unit and base of feudal society was everywhere the landed estate, where the feudal noble, of whatever rank, lived in his fortified house, surrounded by dependents, servile or free, over whom he ruled with supreme authority. A French writer has said that feudalism means "the identification of landed property with sovereignty." In modern times the possession of land gives the owner certain powers over those who live on it; he exacts rents from them; he can turn them off from it, and can influence their lives in many ways direct or indirect. But in the Middle Ages ownership of land gave most of the rights which we associate with sovereignty. The feudal lord could tax those who lived on his land; he could call on them for military assistance; he could force them to work on his land; he could try them in his courts. Without the sovereignty of the landowner over his dependents feudalism could not have existed.

The serfs were the largest and most important class of those who worked upon the land, though free labourers were not unknown. (It is difficult to generalize about the serf's condition, for it varied from time to time and from place to place. In one respect the serf was superior to the modern wage earner.) He had security of tenure. (Custom rather than law forbade the feudal noble to deprive him of his cabin and the land which belonged to it, and the principle of heredity, which was so general in the Middle Ages, assured the descent of) the serf's property <sup>deserf</sup> from father to son. (The serf must often have had a life of security and some comfort;) but he could never escape from complete dependence upon his lord. At every turn he had to contribute to the well-being of his master. There was no limit to the taxes (*taille* is the most general word for these) which could be placed upon him. When he ground the corn or pressed the grapes which grew upon his plot of land, he must use his lord's mill, his lord's wine-press, and pay what custom demanded of him. The labour that he had to perform for his master (known in France

as *corvée*) had no limits (he was *corvéable à miséricorde*), and he could only give to his own land the time which was not demanded by his master. Further, for any quarrel with his fellows or any dispute with his master, he had to appear in his master's court, there to be tried according to the forms laid down by custom, and to pay the fees demanded.

The ruling class rarely attended directly to the administration of the estate. This task was left to an overseer, bailiff, or attendant, while the lord devoted himself to the one honourable occupation, the practice of arms. Until the fourteenth century the armour-clad knight was the one force in war of real importance, and poor men were of necessity excluded from such employment. From youth upwards the feudal noble looked to war for distinction and the gratification of his ambition. He served an apprenticeship in the service of his father or of some other noble, attending to his master's horse, serving at his table, assisting in his toilet. Then at the age of eighteen or twenty he became a knight and entered into the ranks of chivalry. The ceremony of admission was at first a simple one—a light blow on the shoulder from the lord who had trained him, followed by the mounting of a horse and the performance of some martial exercise. But in the thirteenth century the influence of the Church added a religious ceremony. The aspirant to knighthood passed the eve of his admission in prayer. Next day he heard Mass; the sword with which he was girt was taken from the altar. The ceremony was completed by prayer and a sermon, in which the newly "dubbed" knight was urged to remember his duty towards the Church, the poor, and widows. The Chronicles of Froissart give us the brightest picture of the moral virtues of chivalry, and it did much, no doubt, to raise the warfare of the age above mere brutality and plunder. But the same writer will also show us how insufficient its standard was, and how frequently the soldiers of the time fell below that standard. The English Black Prince, who is described as the very flower of chivalry, was capable of the massacre of Limoges.)

**Military  
ideals of  
the ruling  
class.**

**Chivalry.**

The essential feature of feudalism is to be found in the

relations of the members of the noble class to one another, founded as these relations were upon the system of land tenure. No one, except the king, was the absolute owner of his land. The lord of each estate held it as vassal of some other and usually of some greater lord.

The ceremony of homage is significant of the whole relation. The vassal came before his lord, bare-headed and unarmed, and declared on his knees that he became his "man." The lord then kissed him and raised him from his knees. Then the vassal swore fidelity (fealty) to his lord, who gave him some object—a glove, perhaps, or a lance—as a symbol of the landed property (or fief), of which he now became the occupier. The relation thus established between master and vassal was defined by custom, which varied from place to place.

The vassal was always bound to render military service to his lord. He must serve him in arms against all with whom he might be at war. But this assistance was not indefinite. It was limited in time and did not usually extend beyond forty days; it could also be only demanded within a certain distance from the lands for which he did homage. By this stipulation of military service the armies of the Middle Ages were brought into being, consisting of contingents sent up by individual nobles, often widely different in character, often disobedient to the authority of the commander, and inefficient against a more united force. The victories of the English in the Hundred Years' War were largely due to the fact that England had procured a royal army, while France still fought with a feudal one.

The obligations of the feudal inferior did not end with military service. He had also to render him aid on various other occasions; (and aid was usually interpreted to mean money payment.) When a new heir succeeded to the fief there was usually a heavy payment required, and the payment was the heavier if the heir was not a direct descendant of the last tenant. The vassal had to give lodging and hospitality to the lord and his followers on his journeys or his hunting expeditions. Moreover, there were certain incidents or accidents in the feudal lord's life which

were the occasion of payments from the vassal. If he were made prisoner of war, the vassal had to contribute to his ransom ; if he went crusading he demanded an aid for his expenses ; there were payments to be made when his daughter was married and when his son was knighted.

The vassal had to give not only aid, but council. He was bound, that is to say, to come at the call of his lord to deliberate with him on grave questions of peace or war, and he was bound to sit with him and to judge cases that were brought up for his decision. **Council.**

Such are the essentials of the feudal system ; but it is important to notice that it was not really a system at all, but a great confusion, which the principle of land tenure above described was powerless to bring into order. As explained by the theorists, there was a long hierarchy of ranks and powers, stretching up from the serf, through many gradations of nobles, to the king on his throne ; and some writers carried the logic of it further, and made the kings the tenants of the emperor, and the emperor of the pope, who was himself the tenant of God. But no such symmetry is to be found in Western Europe. The tenant was sometimes more powerful than his lord, as when Henry II. of England did homage to the French king ; a man often did homage for different estates to two lords, and there were cases where a man was both lord and tenant to the same person for different lands. **Feudalism in theory and practice.**

Feudalism, it has been said, " was not a disease." It was a spontaneous stage in the development of society, and at a time of toppling governments and barbarian invasions it performed a necessary service in the maintenance of some sort of social bond. But feudalism was always liable to the disease of anarchy. Each feudal lord upon his estates was in effect sovereign, and the feudal tie was wholly insufficient to maintain harmony. Private war was a recognized right of a feudal chief. The strong government set up in England by the Norman Conquest prevented this plague from ravaging our island except on rare occasions ; but in France, Spain, and Germany it was common. So obvious were the disastrous effects of it, and so incapable

was the state of putting a stop to it, that other expedients were tried to destroy it or mitigate it. One of these was **The Truce of God.** The Church, the best organized of all mediæval institutions, attempted to do what the rulers of Europe were unable to do. First the attempt was made absolutely to prohibit private war, and then to limit it within certain periods. The kings often gave the movement their support. In 1085 the emperor Henry IV. proclaimed the Truce of God for Germany. His object, he said, was, as a permanent peace could not be established, at least to exempt certain days from warfare. It was ordained therefore "that from the first day of the advent of our Lord until the end of the day of Epiphany, and from the beginning of Septuagesima until the eighth day after Pentecost, and on every Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday until sunrise on Monday, peace shall be observed." The Church was strong, but not strong enough to restrain with a word the warlike passions of feudal barons, though the Truce of God had some effect in limiting and mitigating warfare.

The administration of justice was not more successful under feudalism than the maintenance of order; (and nowhere **Feudal justice.** is there a greater contrast between the Middle Ages and the classical world on the one hand and the modern world on the other than in the character of trials and the conception of justice.) The administration of justice was in the hands of the feudal noble and the vassals whom he called to his council. His superior in the feudal hierarchy would sometimes interfere, but each nobleman was tenacious of his judicial rights, which were a valuable property. (M. Seignobos writes of justice under the feudal *régime* as follows: "The court makes no effort to probe the question to the bottom and to determine what really has happened; it judges not according to equity and reason, but according to the forms established by custom.") "Feudal justice is essentially an affair of forms, and has its strict rules, like a game; the only business of the judges is to see that the rules are observed, to judge the points and proclaim the winner. (Every trial consists of several acts consecrated by tradition and accompanied by a solemn form of words.) A movement or a word contrary to the rule

is enough to condemn the litigant. At Lille a man who moved his hand, which rested upon the gospels, while he took his oath, at once lost his case."

The most characteristic of the legal processes of feudal society were the ordeal and the trial by battle. There were many forms of ordeal, all irrational and superstitious. The most common was the ordeal of fire, wherein the accused person had to subject some part of his person to the operation of fire; either by walking through burning logs or plunging the hand into boiling water, or holding a heated iron in the hand. Innocence was proved by the healing of the part affected within a certain number of days. The trial by battle or the duel was the usual result of trials among the noble class, but was often used in the case of litigants who were not noble. Reason, evidence, justice had here no place. The function of the court was merely to decide the conditions and to register the result. The practice must have given an evil and dangerous advantage to mere physical strength and placed no check upon the bully.

When the men of the Middle Ages, accustomed to such methods of procedure, became acquainted with the principles and methods of Roman law, they were amazed at the difference. For Roman law acted in the interest of society at large, sought after the truth, balanced evidence, and aimed at justice. It seemed to the twelfth and thirteenth century like a new revelation, and the admiration for Roman law partly accounts for the readiness of many of the best minds of Europe to accept the claims of the holy Roman Empire.

In conclusion we must consider the forces that were undermining feudalism. The Church had passed to some extent into the framework of feudalism, and was often in league with the feudal chiefs; but it was in essence anti-feudal. For it was universal, and feudalism was local; it excluded succession by heredity, and it wielded an authority that had no necessary connection with the ownership of land. The monarchies of Europe were always anti-feudal in proportion to their power.



They had their origins in Western Europe in feudal ideas, but their aim was always to bring all the inhabitants of the realm into subjection to the crown and to break down the local sovereignty of the landowner. We have seen how the kings of France succeeded in these aims and how the emperors in Germany failed ; but, even in Germany, what the emperor failed to do for the whole country was done to a large extent by the individual electors and rulers.

Another anti-feudal force is to be found in the towns which grew up so rapidly in all parts of Europe in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The splendid city civilization of the Roman Empire had died out under the pressure of the fiscal exactions of the empire and the invasions of the barbarians. But the city is a natural form of human organization, and as Europe settled after disorder, and commerce began to move again, city life reappeared, turbulent but vigorous, in all parts of Western Europe. There were a great number of differing types of city life and constitution. Some were entirely self-governing republics ; others were kept in considerable subordination by some king or noble. But all had a large measure of control over their own affairs, and though they were at first a part of the feudal *régime*, they were from the first its decided enemies. Feudalism sprang from and was always connected with the life of the landowner. Liberty, commerce, democracy, art, co-operation, were ideas that flourished in the towns, and feudalism broke up at their approach.

For a general sketch of feudal institutions, see chapters i. and viii. in Vol. II. of the *Histoire Générale* of Lavissee and Rambaud ; *Medieval Europe*, by H. W. C. Davis ; *Le Moyen Age*, by Seignobos ; *Medieval Europe*, by K. Bell.

## CHAPTER XVI

## The Crusades

THE spread of Christianity differs from that of Mahomedanism in the methods by which it was effected. From the early days of Islam the Mahomedan faith was propagated by the sword and by conquest. It was by the triumphs of soldiers that the Christian faith had been driven out from Asia, Africa, and Spain, and the crescent substituted for the cross as the symbol of faith. The great victories of early Christianity, on the other hand, had been won by persuasion and by attraction. The Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals, and Franks had accepted Christianity voluntarily. When the Franks in their turn carried Christianity further East, it was doubtless forced on an unwilling people by hard blows ; and Charlemagne made baptism a condition of submission. Yet even here it was the conversion of the heathen that was aimed at by Boniface and Wilibrord. "We seek not yours, but you," might have been their motto. The heathen were to be won to Christianity, with little scruple indeed as to the means employed ; but they were to be won, not exterminated. The use of force as the chief method of propagating Christianity begins with the crusades : from this time on, the effort of the Church was too often not to convert the heathen but to destroy them.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries armed bands of Christians were constantly attacking the Musulman powers in Palestine, Asia Minor, Egypt, and elsewhere, and this movement is known as the crusades. Seven chief crusades are usually counted, but the number is arbitrary, and the hostility of the Christian and Musulman power in the East was almost continuous.

What were the crusades ? By what motives were the

crusaders impelled? One writer has said that the movement can only be explained by supposing that an epidemic of madness passed over Europe at this time. But strange and romantic as the movement is, fanciful and unreal though it often was, it is not difficult to understand it.

At the end of the eleventh century, the Church was at the very zenith of its power. The influence of Gregory VII. filled the middle of the century, and we have seen how high were the claims which he made for the papacy, and how far he succeeded in realizing them. When the Church spoke through its great representative all Europe listened and thought it a duty to obey. It was pre-eminently the Age of Faith.

It was also the Age of War. Society rested on the feudal basis; and the core of feudalism was the armed knight. Men embarked then on a war with a readiness hardly conceivable now. War took the place of sport and politics, and even of commerce. The growth of monarchies was curbing the opportunities of private war. When an opportunity arose which allowed the feudal nobility of Europe to fight and to conquer territory in the rich East, with the sanction and under the orders of religion, there is no difficulty in understanding why it was eagerly embraced.

The Church had its own reasons for urging on the enterprise. Pilgrimage had come to be an important part of the religious life of the time. The shrine of Thomas Becket, of St. James of Compostella, and many other saints attracted their crowds. But the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem was the greatest of all objects of pilgrimage. Hitherto, though Jerusalem was in the hands of the unbeliever, access to the Holy Places had not been difficult. But at the end of the eleventh century Islam was again advancing both in the East and in the West. A cry for help came from Constantinople, and the pilgrims to the Sepulchre were either stopped altogether or advanced only in face of manifold dangers and insults.

The popes and the Eastern emperors—these were the real authors of the crusades. And the crusades are best understood if we look at them from Constantinople. The Eastern

Empire fell out from the centre of the European story after the time of Charlemagne, but it was still the chief bulwark of European culture in the East against the forces of barbarism. Feudalism had made some head-<sup>The Eastern</sup> way even in the East; but the East was not <sup>Empire.</sup> feudalized as France or Germany were. The emperor was the great centre of the administration; his relations with the Church were so close that there was no possibility of such struggles between the spiritual and temporal power as rent Western Christendom in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries; the principles of Roman Law formed the basis of the administration. Greek was the official language. A well-organized mercenary army drawn from various races was usually an efficient weapon. In Constantinople a high level of culture, erudition, and art was maintained down to the end of the twelfth century.

Constantinople itself was an impregnable fortress, but wave after wave of barbarians swept over the Balkan peninsula. In the eighth century an invasion of Slavonians had penetrated even to the Peloponnese and a large number of them settled permanently in Greece. At the end of the ninth century there came the new and dreaded <sup>Bulgarians.</sup> race of the Bulgarians. They swept on in a conquering horde as far as Corinth, and it seemed as though they would become a dominating force in the peninsula. But a powerful emperor arose—Basil “the slayer of the Bulgarians”—and in 1014 they were defeated with huge loss, and all the sufferings that they had inflicted on the empire were avenged with horrible cruelty: the eyes of many thousands of them were put out, and they were sent home as evidence of what came of attacking the empire. In the tenth century, too, another enemy—ominous of danger in the far distant future—had appeared before the walls of Constantinople. Russia had been recently occupied by the Northmen, and in 941 a fleet of their vessels from the Black Sea appeared before the city. They were driven off by “Greek Fire” and this particular danger did not appear again. We have already seen how the empire had lost her possessions in Italy and Sicily. In Asia Minor the empire still ruled over a rich country, and in the

mountains of Isauria over a warlike population. But in the eleventh century a new danger arose even there. A new race —the Seljukian Turks—had seized Bagdad and infused new energy into Mahomedanism (1055). Syria and Palestine soon fell to them, and their ignorant fanaticism brought danger and oppression to the pilgrims to the Holy Places: Europe soon rang with the stories of their sufferings. The Turks then penetrated Asia Minor, and in 1071 an imperial army was crushed at Mansikert and an emperor taken prisoner.

The Mahomedans had not been so dangerous since the eighth century, and it was not only in the East that their arms were successful. In Spain the Christian states had been slowly gaining ground, but here, too, there was a revival of Musulman energy, and in 1086 the Christians lost the great battle of Zallaca. Europe, as in the eighth century, was threatened on both fronts. An effort was really needed to drive the heathen back. Gregory VII., the author of so much that is most important in the eleventh century, called on Europe for a great effort, but the hour had not yet come. In 1095 Pope Urban II. held a great Council at Clermont. So great was the gathering that no building could contain all who came. After some business of minor importance the Pope addressed the crowd and called for a general attack upon the Mahomedans. He quoted (with a strange perversion of meaning such as was frequent in the Middle Ages) the text, "He who will not take up his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." In a frenzy of excitement those present cried, "It is the will of God," and, attaching to their dress strips of red cloth in the form of a cross, prepared for the great enterprise, in which they believed themselves certain of the support and the direct guidance of God.

A noble enthusiasm was nearly always the motive of those who embarked on the crusades; but when the movement was once begun personal ambition, the hope of gain, the animal instinct for fighting, greed, hate, revenge, and cruelty all cloaked themselves under the pretext of the crusade. It was not only against the Mahomedan that violence was let loose.

The Jews who resided in the west found their lot changed for the worse, and had to suffer pillage and sometimes even torture at the hands of those who set out to rescue the land where Christ died for all mankind.

Before what is usually called the first crusade, a great throng of men, women, and children set off under Peter the Hermit, whose preaching had done much to rouse the enthusiasm for the crusade by his account of the sufferings of the pilgrims. They marched without organization, expecting miracles at every turn, and suffering dreadfully on their route.

The  
prelude  
to the  
first  
crusade.

Those of them who reached Constantinople were sent across to Asia Minor by the emperor, who was glad to get rid of such strange allies, and there they quickly fell victims to the sword of the Mahomedans. Peter the Hermit escaped and lived to see the realization of his dreams.

Meanwhile, the first real crusade was preparing. No king took part in it; but the great nobles of Western Europe eagerly offered their services. They came in greater numbers from France than from any other country, and the number of French who took part in the crusades warrants the name which is given to the whole movement by a chronicler, "Gesta Dei per Francos."

The  
first  
crusade.

Raymond of Toulouse led a band of Provençals and Italians. The Normans, Bohemond and Tancred, led an army from the South of Italy and Sicily. Hugh of Vermandois, the brother of the French king, and Robert of Normandy, the brother of the English king, led French and Normans. Godfrey of Bouillon was the leader of French and Germans from the Rhineland: he was not the commander of the host, for the host had no single commander; but his name came to be the most prominent in the great adventure. The crusaders made their way by various routes to Constantinople: some by the Danube which had been opened to a Christian army by the recent conversion of the King of Hungary; some by the sea which was secured against Mahomedan attacks by the recent development of the navies of the maritime states of Italy, such as Pisa, Genoa, and Venice.

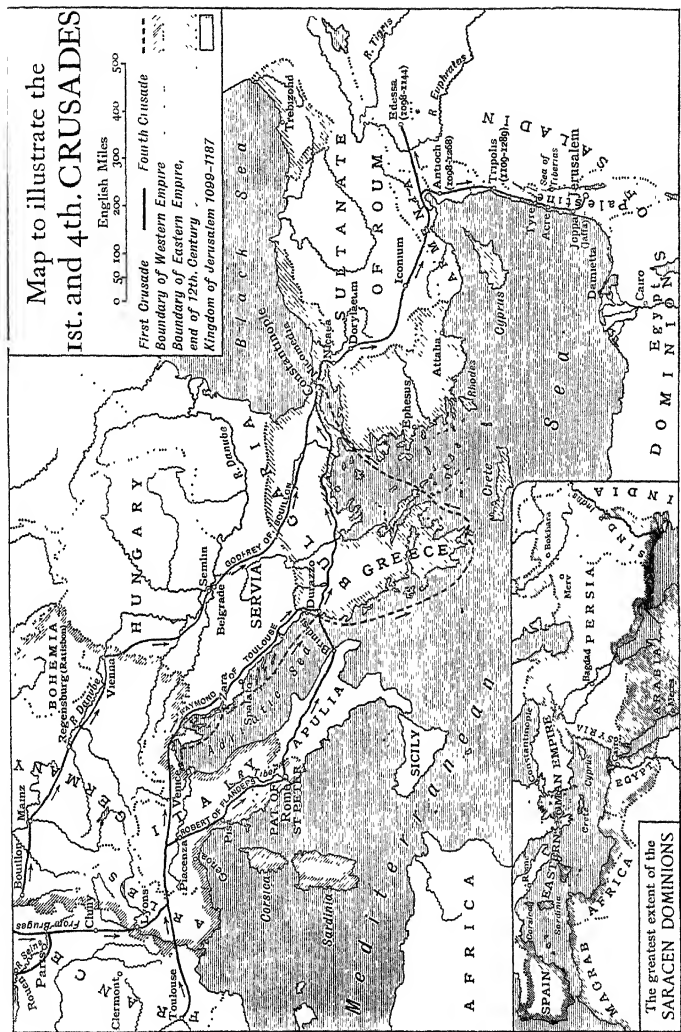
At Constantinople a difficulty at once appeared, which was

ultimately to endanger the success and the stability of the whole effort of Christian Europe against Islam. If lands were won from the Turks to whom should they belong ?

**Difficulties of the crusaders.** The Emperor Alexius demanded that the crusaders should do homage for all that they won : they, on the contrary, looked forward to carving out independent possessions for themselves. At last they took the oath of fealty to the emperor, but the future was to show how little it weighed with them.

The numbers of the crusaders had already shrunk far below the vague myriads which are ascribed to them at the beginning of their enterprise. They were in many ways ill-prepared for the contest that lay in front of them. They trusted to the heavy armed knights who had become the chief arm of Western armies ; and they were to find that those knights were often ineffective against their more nimble opponents. Yet when it came to blows the crusaders were decidedly the stronger. They advanced across Asia Minor, captured Antioch, and defended it against a relieving force, and at last appeared before Jerusalem ; their numbers had shrunk to some 25,000. They found a fleet of Genoese ships at Jaffa, and from them they got the timber required for their siege apparatus. They marched round the city in religious procession with Peter the Hermit at their head. But the walls could only be carried by heavy fighting. The furious attack came on 15 July, 1099. Godfrey of Bouillon was among the first to mount the walls. Their great enterprise was crowned with success. Passionate religious zeal and fierce hatred of the heathen enemy combined to rule their actions. To slay the enemy was to do God a service. They wrote to the Pope : " God was appeased by our humility, and on the eighth day after our humiliation he delivered the city and his enemies to us. . . . And, if you desire to know what was done with the enemy who were found there, know that in Solomon's porch and in his temple our men rode in the blood of the Saracens up to the knees of their horses."

It remained to distribute and to organize the conquest. The disruptive ideas of feudalism controlled the action of the



The First and Fourth Crusades



victors. No single strong state was founded, but the newly won territory was divided into four Latin (that is, Catholic) states. Baldwin occupied the County of Edessa; Bohemond the Principality of Antioch; Raymond occupied Tripoli; all these owed allegiance to the kingdom of Jerusalem, which fell to Godfrey's share, though he refused the title of king and accepted only that of Defender of the Holy Sepulchre.

Special religious orders were founded, first for the assistance of pilgrims, and then for the defence of the hardly won land.

The chief were the Knights Templars, the Knights Hospitallers (Knights of St. John), and the Knights of the Teutonic order. These men proposed to join the virtues and the rigorous asceticism of the monk to the courage and vigour of the soldier. Religious enthusiasm has often inspired the most heroic courage; but the effort to blend in permanent union the characteristics of the monk and the knight proved a failure. The orders prospered in numbers and wealth, and all have an important history, but in all it was the knight and not the monk that triumphed.

The Latin states of the East soon showed themselves unstable. The number of the Christian conquerors was small; they were only a garrison of occupation. The nobles were jealous of one another, and the presence of the enemy could not keep them from private war. The Eastern Empire which they had saved for the time from the pressure of the Turks, regarded them with jealousy and alarm. Its territory had been increased; but its trade had been ruined. Venetians, Genoese, Pisans, had established themselves in the harbours of the East. The course of commerce was diverted from Constantinople, and the trade of the city is said to have fallen by nearly a half. In the future the emperors were sometimes ready to join with the Saracen enemy against their Christian allies.

The divisions and jealousies of the crusading states soon allowed the Mahomedans to recover some of their lost ground. In 1144 Edessa fell into their hands. Saint Bernard preached a new crusade. Louis VII., King of

France, and the Emperor Conrad responded to the call ; but the second crusade effected nothing, and St. Bernard saw in its failure the punishment of God for the sins of the Christian powers of the West. But soon there came news from the East which called peremptorily for another effort. A great Mahomedan ruler had arisen, who succeeded for a time in welding the dispersed Mahomedan states in the East into a compact whole. This was Saladin, whose courage, generosity, and comparative humanity have passed into legend, which exaggerates, but does not misrepresent the character of the great soldier. He advanced from Egypt into Syria. The Christian powers were quarrelling bitterly about the succession of the kingdom of Jerusalem, and the Count of Tripoli even allied himself with Saladin. A great battle by the sea of Tiberias decided the issue. The Templars and the Knights rallied desperately round the fragment of the true cross. But all availed nothing against the terrible leader and the greater numbers of their opponents. Saladin advanced next against Jerusalem, forced it to surrender and used his victory with humanity. Soon there was little left of the victories that had given Christian Europe so much glory and had cost so much blood. The cry for another crusade rose at once.

The third crusade, like the second, was conducted by kings. The Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, Richard Cœur de Lion of England, Philip II., the great King of France ; all consented to go out on this holy war. They had all three much to do in their own countries, but the pressure put upon them by the papacy was strong, and they left for the East, postponing their quarrels and ambitions. Without the motive of religion and the influence of the Church the crusade could never have taken place ; but, once embarked on their adventure the leaders displayed no singleness of purpose, nor was their action controlled by thoughts of religion. The crusade was a failure. The Emperor Frederick was drowned during his march across Asia Minor ; Richard Cœur de Lion and Philip II. of France quarrelled on the road to the Holy Land, and quarrelled when they got

there. They won some victories. Cyprus was taken (1191). The army of Saladin could not prevent them from taking Acre. United action might perhaps have given them Jerusalem. But Philip was anxious to get back to France. He saw in Richard's power in Normandy an enemy much more dangerous than Saladin. Richard remained a little longer. He left behind him a memory of great courage, of military prowess and the knightly virtues. But in humanity he fell far below the standard set by Saladin; he slaughtered his prisoners at Acre, whereas Saladin had freed those who fell into his hands at Jerusalem. A study of his career shows how fantastic was the whole enterprise of the crusades, how little religion influenced the soldiers of the Cross, and how evil was the influence of the action of the crusaders on the repute of the Church.

The second and third crusades produced no important results. But the fourth was an event of great European importance.

Innocent III. was the real author of the fourth crusade. Amidst all the many troubles of his pontificate it was his constant hope to unite again the armies of Christendom against the Mahomedans who remained in unshaken possession of the Holy Land. He partially succeeded in his enterprise; but he unchained forces which he could not control and he regretted at last the results of the movement which he had labelled with the holy sign. The fourth crusade was an aristocratic, not a royal movement, and again the chief actors in it came from France and her borders. Theobald, Count of Champagne, Baldwin, Count of Flanders, and Simon de Montfort were the chief leaders. They made their way to Venice and sought there ships to take them direct to the Syrian coast. The commercial states of north Italy had played a great part in the crusading movement and had profited vastly by it. They had secured trading rights in all the chief towns of the East, and had diverted trade from Constantinople into the harbours of Venice and Genoa. Venice, above all other cities, had found advantage in the holy wars. The city of the

lagoons was conscious of her strength and of her opportunities. Secure in her fastnesses she had resisted the attacks of the maritime powers of the Adriatic. She had drawn all the population of the islands under a single government, and had given to the government a strong aristocratic and commercial character. Already she held important trading rights at Constantinople, and her ambitions were looking to further triumphs when the crusaders asked for ships to take them to the Holy Land. Venice drove a hard bargain with them. They had no ready money, and the Venetians would only furnish ships on condition that the expedition sailed in the first instance against the city of Zara, on the east of the Adriatic, a Christian city, but a naval and commercial rival of Venice. The Doge of Venice, Dandolo, an old man said to have been nearly ninety and totally blind, but vigorous still, and burning with ambition for Venice, accompanied the expedition. The Pope in vain protested against the misuse of the army of the Cross. Zara was besieged and taken and handed over to Venice. But even then the expedition did not sail for the Holy Land. There came to the camp at Zara information which opened up the prospect of a greater adventure, in which Venice would certainly be a gainer. There had been a fierce palace struggle at Constantinople, and Alexius, the son of the late emperor, and the nephew of the reigning emperor, came to ask the help of the crusaders against his usurping uncle. He promised trading concessions to the Venetians, pay to the crusaders, and salved their consciences (if that were needed) by the prospect of the union of the Eastern with the Western Church. Again, therefore, these soldiers, signed with the cross and pledged to fight against the infidel, moved against a Christian city, and this time against one which for centuries had been the chief defence of Europe against the Mahomedan. They succeeded in deposing the reigning emperor and setting up their candidate, Alexius IV., instead. He reigned as their puppet, and the population rose against him and his supporters. Alexius IV. was slain, and his death gave the crusaders a welcome excuse for an assault upon the city in their own interest. The city had never yet

The  
attack  
on Zara.

Appeal  
from  
Constanti-  
nople.

been taken during its life of nine centuries, and if properly defended was still impregnable; but the defence was weak and corrupt, and the city fell into the hands of the **Capture of Constantinople.** crusaders. Never, said an eye-witness, had there been such plunder in any city since the world began. Priceless treasures of art and monuments of antiquity, for which the Venetians and their allies had no care, were destroyed; but the gold and silver, the precious tapestries for which the city was famous, were systematically sought out and divided. The citizens were submitted to indiscriminate slaughter. Then the crusaders determined to set up a new government. The schismatic Church of the East was replaced by Catholicism after the Roman model. A new emperor was chosen from the ranks of the crusaders—Baldwin of Flanders, Venice occupied a large district of the city for her commerce, and the old Doge realized his most ambitious dreams. But it was a dreadful and a fatal deed, “an act of colossal brigandage on the part of adventurers, who had hypocritically taken the crusading vow.” The defences of Christian Europe were seriously weakened, for the new empire was not nearly so strong as the old one. Large territories both in Europe and Asia never obeyed the new “Latin” rulers. The new state lived a weak and troubled existence from 1204 to 1262. Then the Greek Church and the national sentiment of the East overthrew the feeble Latin empire, and a new Greek **Restoration of the Greek Empire.** empire was set up under the *Palæologi*. But it never recovered its old strength. When two centuries later Constantinople fell to the Turks (1453), the causes of that great disaster are largely to be found in the evil effects of the fourth crusade.

With this lamentable success the great period of the crusades was quite over. After the fourth it is impossible to distinguish the crusades by number. The popes fell into the evil habit of declaring any war in which they were interested “a crusade,” and the expeditions sent out against the Mahomedans are none of them on the same scale as the first four crusades. **The “fifth” crusade.** There was an expedition against Egypt in 1218, which is usually called the fifth crusade. Egypt was chosen as the point of attack, because the centre of the

Mahomedan power was in Egypt. This expedition was conducted by a papal legate, Pelagius, and it was his implacable temper which prevented it from achieving a solid success. Damietta, at the mouth of the Nile, was taken. The Sultan offered to hand over Jerusalem to the crusaders if they would restore him Damietta; but they refused, and were soon overwhelmed, and lost Damietta and all. Frederick II. (whom we have seen as Emperor and King of Sicily and Naples) was wiser when he went to the Holy Land in 1229. He was urged on to the crusade by the Pope, and excommunicated because he returned in a few days. Still lying under excommunication he sailed again. Arrived in Palestine he showed himself ready to treat with the Sultan of Egypt, for in his own dominions he lived on such good terms with the Saracens that he was not likely to reject all terms with them in Palestine. He secured free access to the Holy Places for pilgrims, and to gain this made a defensive treaty with the Sultan. No one had done so much for Christianity in the East since the first crusade; but on his return Frederick found that the Pope had punished him for going on the Holy War while lying under sentence of excommunication by placing the kingdom of Naples under an interdict.

The victories of diplomacy in Palestine proved as transitory as those won by arms. There was violent civil war among the Mahomedans, but the Christians could take no advantage of it. When the Sultan of Egypt was master of the situation again he easily swept away the scanty remains of Christian power in Syria. In 1244 Jerusalem was again in Mahomedan hands, and was never again in Christian hands until 1918.

But before the crusading movement expired it was associated with one of the greatest names of mediæval Christianity and directed by him with the purest possible motives. Saint Louis of France sailed for Egypt in 1248 with a French army, and with him went Joinville, the chronicler of the expedition. We get from him a most attractive picture of the saintly king, but we get also a clear conviction of the hopelessness of the whole crusading enterprise. Damietta was retaken. Then the French army advanced on Cairo. At Mansourah the Mahomedan army

The  
crusade  
of Frede-  
rick II.

Saint  
Louis  
as  
crusader.

inflicted on the crusaders a decisive defeat. A fragment only of the force escaped and tried to make their way to the coast, but, harassed by the enemy and weakened by loathsome disease, Saint Louis surrendered in order to get better terms for his men. He had to abandon Damietta and to pay an enormous ransom. As soon as he was free, Saint Louis made his way to Palestine to organize and strengthen the few garrisons still remaining there. He did his work devotedly and well ; but all was of no avail. Hardly had he left the East when a new invasion swept over the land ; commanded this time by the Mongolian Bibars. Antioch and Jaffa fell into his hands (1268). Acre held out a little longer, but it also fell in 1291, and then there was nothing left in Palestine for all the efforts and all the blood that had been spent in the crusades. Before the end came Saint Louis, with the support of Edward of England, son of Henry III., made one last effort and led an expedition to Tunis, in the hope of effecting the conversion of the Sultan. The plague fell on his army. The king himself died in 1270. The last of the genuine crusaders died with him.

There were, even after this, many movements which were called crusades, but none that deserved the name. The popes had learnt that they could strengthen their arms, in many struggles in which they were interested, by calling them crusades and giving to those who fought in them the privileges which had been accorded to the followers of Godfrey of Bouillon and Saint Louis. But Europe, as a whole, no longer responded to the call, and the credit of the Church was injured by the attempt to regard as " holy wars " expeditions which were prompted by the secular motives of ambition, greed, or revenge.

What was the result of it all ? It is very doubtful whether the cause of Christianity in the East had profited in any way.

**The results of the crusades.** There was no Christian force left on the continent of Asia. Rhodes and Cyprus were in Christian hands, and remained so for some time longer (Rhodes until 1522, Cyprus until 1571). But if these acted as valuable checks to the growth of the Ottoman Turks in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there must be set against them the weakening of Constantinople by the

fourth crusade. There is no good ground for the claim that "the crusades saved Europe."

The indirect results of the crusades were great and lasting. The cities of Italy owed to them the rapid advance of their commerce, and with their commerce, of their municipal government and their artistic achievements. Venice gained most of all, though she had <sup>The gain of Italy.</sup> to fight hard with Genoa before she could maintain her hold upon the spoils she had won. The contact of the East and West had been fruitful too in other ways. New grains, fruits, trees, spices, stuffs now came for the first time into Europe. The art of the East influenced and stimulated the art of the West, especially the art of Venice. It was said, too, that the ideas of the East had not been without their effect on the West. Christian Europe had gone out to the war confident in the support of the God of Battles in the struggle <sup>Heresy.</sup> waged in His cause. But the result had been disappointing : shortlived triumphs, lasting defeats, the waste of life and treasure, and the boundaries of Christianity not materially expanded. There was food for thought in all this. It was said later that the Mahomedan victories in the East had had an influence in producing the strange Albigensian heresies of the South of France

Lastly, the crusades marked and caused a deterioration in the relation of the Church to its enemies. They stimulated immensely the temper and the practice of religious persecution. No declaration of war was necessary <sup>The crusades and religious persecution.</sup> against the infidel : his religion was a sufficient ground for drawing the sword against him. The massacres of the Jews during the first and third crusades, and the so-called Albigensian crusade show that this principle could be applied in Western Europe. The inquisition in all its forms is only an application of the same spirit.

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The story of the crusades is told by Gibbon and in the ecclesiastical histories of Milman and Robertson. Archer and Kingsford; *The Crusades* in the *Story of the Nations*. G. W. Cox; *The Crusades*. Stanley Lane-Poole's *Saladin*. Villehardouin's *History of the Conquest of Constantinople* and Joinville's *Life of Saint Louis* are two delightful chronicles. The article on The Crusades in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* deserves mention.



## CHAPTER XVII

British History from 1066 to 1307; the beginning of  
National Unity and of Parliament

THE history of England during the period that we consider in this chapter has three distinctive features. Firstly, the monarchy was stronger than was to be found in any other considerable state; secondly, the nation became more united and more conscious of itself; thirdly, it established a form of representative government which, though it has analogies elsewhere, is far more successful and permanent than any that is to be found in any other European state.

## I

The first two features are closely connected, and are indeed different phases of the same fact. The nation was united because the monarchy was strong. It was the great service which the sometimes oppressive Norman monarchy rendered to England that it crushed out the separatist tendencies in the different districts of the country; that it prevented feudalism from exhibiting the anarchical character which is associated with it in French and German history; that town and country, noble and commoner, could so soon join together and establish a common form of government. It will make the situation in England plainer if we compare and contrast it with the contemporary condition of France and Germany. There feudalism had grown up spontaneously as the result of the disintegration of the Empire of Charlemagne. The chiefs of the feudal nobility were great and practically sovereign powers; representing often local and even racial feeling; engaging in private war when it suited their purposes, and bringing their tenants into the field by as full a right as that by which a king called

on his subjects for support ; exercising supreme judicial power, and sometimes symbolizing their sovereignty by a separate coinage. In France as late as the middle of the thirteenth century there were districts that were technically "within the obedience of the king" and other districts which were not within his obedience.

Very different was the situation in England. William the Norman was determined not to allow the evils of feudalism, as he knew them in France, to reappear in England ; and after the conquest the country was in his hands to fashion as he chose. We have seen with what clear-sighted skill he had arranged the estates and clipped the powers of the feudal

**Peculiar  
features of  
English  
government.**

barons, and the future gave proof of the efficacy of his measures. The barons of England were as eager as their fellows in France to assert their own power against the state as a whole, and the reigns of William II., Henry I., and Stephen are full of the struggles which fill up so much of French history. It was not only with the ordinary nobles that the English kings had trouble ; their worst foes were often those of their own household. Thus, in 1088, William II. [Rufus]

**Risings of  
Norman  
barons.**

was attacked by his brother Robert, who ruled in Normandy, and by the English barons under the leadership of Bishop Odo of Bayeux. It is noteworthy that William II., brutal and oppressive ruler though he often showed himself, was able to call on the English for help ; and it was English help that gave this Norman king victory over his Norman barons. Another typical rising came in Henry I.'s reign, when once more Robert of Normandy was in arms against the English king. He was in loose league with malcontents in England, and they had a powerful leader in Robert of Bellême, who ruled over wide estates in England and Normandy, and, as Earl Palatine of Shrewsbury, had more independence than the king allowed to most of the baronage of England. The struggle was a severe one. The danger would have been very much greater if the insurgents had been supported by the native English, but, as usual, these stood aside or gave active help to the king. Robert of Bellême's great castle at Bridgenorth (as an Earl Palatine he

had an unusually strong castle) was taken, and he was driven to take refuge in Normandy. But it is the reign of Stephen that shows us from what evils we were saved by the rough strength of the English kings. Henry I. had no legitimate son to survive him, and he had tried to secure the throne for his daughter Matilda. She had been married first to the Emperor Henry V. (and is hence usually known as the Empress Matilda), and subsequently to Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou, to whom she bore a son who was afterwards the great King Henry II. But the rule of a woman was unpopular, if not unprecedented, and on Henry I.'s death the nobles gave the crown to Stephen, who was the son of the Conqueror's daughter. He was a brave, popular, chivalrous man; much to be preferred as a friend and comrade to Henry II.; but he was also one of the most fatal rulers who has ever sat on the throne of England. The one great feature of his reign is the outbreak of feudal anarchy. Stephen had to face throughout his reign the efforts of Matilda and her son Henry to win the English crown, which they regarded as belonging to them by right. Against these attacks from beyond the channel Stephen relied, not on the help of the English, but upon the feudal baronage, and, in consequence, he gave to them liberties and privileges which they had not known since the Conquest. Especially they proceeded to build for themselves castles and to rule there, as, doubtless, they thought a baron ought to rule. Their cruelties may have been exaggerated, though a contemporary chronicler describes the reign as one of desolation and crime which went unchecked and unpunished. For this short period England was what large tracts of Germany and France usually were. The death of Stephen's son was a great gain for England, for it made him ready to accept a compromise whereby he was to keep the throne for his life, and Henry was then to succeed. So Henry II. became king without challenge in 1154.

The mediæval world had hardly a more remarkable ruler than Henry of Anjou. We have already glanced at the importance of his position for French history, and the vast extent of his dominions is indicated on the

map on p. 270. His reign is important for England in many ways; for his foreign policy; for his bitter quarrel with Becket; for his invasion of Ireland; but above all for his organization of the government of England. It is this last point only that we will examine here. He gave to the twelfth century its great example of a really strong monarchy; he was the state as really as Louis XIV. of France, centuries afterwards; and his building up of autocratic government prepared the way for the uprising of the nation, for the development of a national parliament, and ultimately for the rule of the people.

First he settled accounts with the nobles. Their newly built castles were destroyed (we shall find Richelieu in France doing the same thing in the seventeenth century); many grants of land were revoked; the barons felt themselves in the hands of a strong ruler, and accepted their fate without much resistance. What had hitherto been done had rather aimed at preventing the development of the power of the nobles than at building up the controlling power of the Crown. It was the special task of Henry II. to accomplish this. His chief interest was the administration of law. No single system had as yet been established. The popular courts of the English lasted on side by side with new introductions from Normandy. It was Henry II. who laid the foundations on which the later administrative and judicial system of England has been reared. He established the rule of Law.

First in importance comes the regular despatch of itinerant judges to go throughout the land and preside at the various courts. We have seen something like them in Charlemagne's *missi dominici*. This meant that there would practically be an end of baronial and feudal justice in cases of importance; the law that would be administered everywhere by the judges would be the King's Law, and the barons' courts would henceforth dwindle in importance.

Next the judges were to be assisted on their rounds by "juries." This famous word, which has gone the round of the world, did not at first carry the same meaning that it has for our ears to day. The juries that

Henry II.'s age knew were Grand Juries or Juries of Presentment, consisting of a certain number of the most prominent men of the district whose business it was to give to the travelling judges the names of the evil-doers of the district, who were then accused and tried. Trial by jury was substituted in some cases where the barbarous method of trial by battle had previously been practised.

Important changes, too, were made in the organization of the fighting force of England. The Assize of Arms of 1181 made it incumbent on every free man to provide The army. himself with arms, and to be ready to take his part in the defence of the realm against foreign or domestic foes. More and more the feudal obligation of military service from the lesser landowners of England fell into the background. For foreign expeditions Henry relied on a tax called *scutage* or shield money, which took the place of military service and allowed the king to raise a force more dependent on himself and more efficient than the old feudal levy.

As a result of such measures as these the unity of the country was rapidly being built up. There were still wide National differences of language and custom between the unity. English and the Normans, but these tended to be effaced. The baronage found the road to independence decisively closed against them by the power of the king, and hence they were driven to find support in the alliance with the English Commons. While Henry II. ruled this was not of much consequence; but when a weak and unpopular king was on the throne the results of the reconciliation of the races quickly showed themselves.

## II

In this section we shall examine some of the prominent features of the years between the death of the Conqueror and that of Henry II. (1087-1189) other than those concerned with the development of the system of government and administration.

First the relation of the Crown to the Church, which is so important for all Europe at this time, caused much trouble

to the rulers of our island. The Norman kings valued the Church, and found in it a useful ally. They were great builders of churches; they had given the Church **The Crown** a larger measure of independence than it had **and the** previously possessed; they found in the great **Church.** ecclesiastics their most trusted ministers. On the other side the Pope and the prominent churchmen in England and Rome viewed the Norman monarchy with approval and hope. Yet a conflict came which had incidents almost as tragic as those which marked the struggle between Gregory VII. and the Emperor Henry IV. The English events are indeed a part of that larger struggle.

The names of two great churchmen emerge in the conflict. First, Anselm, who was afterwards called Saint. He was abbot of Bec, in Normandy, and was honoured for **Saint** his learning and his character. On the death of **Anselm.** Lanfranc the archbishopric of Canterbury was kept for a long time vacant in order that King William might enjoy its revenues. Then in a moment of royal repentance, caused by a serious illness, Anselm was appointed. There was soon strife between them. This was the time when the Investiture Contest was at its fiercest, and we have seen that the question at issue in that controversy was whether the loyalty of the bishops belonged to the king or to the Pope; it was not a question that could be solved by good intentions; it required hard thinking and much experience before the line could be drawn with tolerable success between the functions of the Church and those of the State. Anselm asked permission to go to Rome to receive his pallium at the hands of the Pope, and William refused it. In the end Anselm had to find an exile in Normandy.

The accession of the more learned and religious Henry I. did not dispose of the trouble. Still the question was there. Is the archbishop the king's servant or the Pope's? The contest was not conducted with such brutality as in the days of Rufus; and before long a compromise was reached, which was very nearly that which was subsequently accepted by the Pope in the Concordat of Worms. The king renounced the claim to invest the archbishop with the symbols of his spiritual

office, and on his side the archbishop consented to do homage for his lands to the king

In Henry II.'s reign a somewhat similar quarrel reached a more tragic issue. Thomas Becket was born in London of

Norman parents. He is a strange, enigmatic figure.

**Becket.** He had learning, charm of manner, and much practical ability. He was at first the king's chancellor, and had served him so well and had championed the rights of the Crown with such zeal that when the see of Canterbury became vacant the king secured his appointment, thinking that Becket would be the man to bring the power and influence of the Church to the support of the Crown. But Henry had mistaken his man "Whatever he did, he did with his whole heart. He served many masters, but only one at a time; first his bishop, then the king, then his God."

The quarrel came over the question of the independence and separate government of the Church. The clergy demanded that they should be tried only by their own tri-  
**His quarrel with the king.** bunals, and that the ordinary law courts should have no jurisdiction over them. But as the Church law was very mild, and the law of the land often very cruel, that meant that clergymen who were guilty of theft or murder or any other serious offence escaped with a light penalty, while an ordinary man who committed the same crime would suffer death. To our modern sense the king's protest against this system seems wholly justified, but to Becket it seemed that the Church's duty was to conduct its affairs on a different and a higher plane than the State, to live its own life and to be an example to the State. In 1164 the king put forward the sixteen articles of the "Constitutions of Clarendon." Their general tendency was to subordinate the clergy to the State, but the chief article was the third. By this a clergyman who was accused of crime was to be tried by the ecclesiastical courts, and if he were found guilty he was to be degraded from holy orders and then punished by the State, as any one else would be. Becket yielded at first, but then withdrew his agreement with these proposals. There followed efforts at reconciliation; then Becket fled to the Continent. For a time it seemed as though the quarrel might be patched up. But

Becket became more and more decided in his challenge of the royal authority. In 1170 four knights, acting as Murder of they believed in accordance with the wishes of the Becket. king, went to Canterbury and murdered the archbishop in his own cathedral. The sensation produced by the event was prodigious. Until the time of the Reformation Becket's name was one of the most revered in Europe, and his shrine the scene of some of the most popular of pilgrimages. Henry, passionate and determined though he was, found that he had provoked an enemy that was too strong for him. He was master of immense material force, but he was defeated by the moral indignation which was called out by the stories of the martyrdom of Becket. He found it necessary to visit Canterbury and do humiliating penance at the tomb of Becket. Henceforth the clergy were tried and sentenced in their own courts as before the Constitutions of Clarendon, and the Church retained its own complete organization apart from the State until the Reformation.

Henry was primarily rather statesman than soldier; but he used war readily enough to reach political ends. It was probably well for England that Scotland, Wales, and Ireland had hitherto remained to a large extent outside of the control of the English Crown. Had these foreign races been included in the kingdom the assimilation of English and Normans could not have gone on so rapidly. Now Henry carried out attacks upon all three, and the Norman methods of warfare, which had overthrown the English, proved victorious everywhere. An independent national state was maintained in Wales. North Wales, but nowhere else. The King of Scotland, William the Lion—a brave and skilful soldier—was taken prisoner at Alnwick and forced to do homage for his kingdom to the King of England; an English garrison was even admitted into Edinburgh. The reign of Henry, too, saw the beginning of the long and tragic story of the connection between England and Ireland. There had been The “Con-noble things in the past history of Ireland; she quest” of had done much for religion and not a little for Ireland. culture; her repulse of the Danes had shown her possessed of a vigour which contemporary England had not exhibited. But



in the twelfth century she was torn by faction and civil war, and in 1166 Dermot, King of Leinster, appealed to England for help against his enemies who had expelled him. Richard of Clare (Strongbow), the Norman Earl of Pembroke, went on the adventure. He landed in Waterford and gained some victories over the neighbouring chiefs. Five years later the king himself came over and took the title of Lord of Ireland. These events are what is known as the Conquest of Ireland; but they do not deserve their name. Anglo-Norman influence established itself on the south-east and penetrated some distance into the interior, but Ireland was not conquered until the sixteenth century. The growth of a strong and independent Irish state was made impossible, but no English government was established.

We have seen that Henry ruled over more French territory than the French king himself, and a great part of **Troubles in France** his energies were devoted to its government. But his reign was not the great success in France that it was in England. His wife, Eleanor, who had brought him vast territories in the south of France as her dowry, was among his worst enemies, and his own children were constantly in rebellion or intriguing against him. But we must not follow out this tangled story. When it came to open conflict the king was usually successful; but a settled system of rule was not reached. At the end of his life he was again occupied with this insoluble problem. The incredible exertions of his restless life, and the news of the treason of his best-loved son John, brought this mighty ruler to his death in 1189.

### III

For more than a century the current of the life of England had set towards the monarchy. The kings had been egoistic and rough-handed. Not one of them has left behind him a name that evokes popular admiration or love. Yet it is certain that the monarchy did better for the country than any form of liberty could have done at that time. It was the monarchy that gave us order, law, and, in the end, a sense of

national unity. And by its victory it prepared the way for its own overthrow.

There are many contrasts between English and French history. Here is one of the most central. In France the mediæval monarchy is usually allied with the people <sup>France</sup> against the nobility; while in England the nobles <sup>and</sup> and the people from the beginning of the <sup>England</sup> thirteenth century join forces against the monarchy. There is nothing accidental or mysterious in this contrast. The English Crown gained at a stroke—through the Norman conquest—a completeness of power that the French monarchy took centuries to win. It was a common submission that made the alliance of the nobility and commons of England possible. In France, when the monarchy had at last won its way to absolutism, we may see something of the same sort happening.

If the successors of Henry II. had been as strong or as wise as he, we should have had a different story to tell. But no method has ever been found of securing a succession of good kings, and the very fact of victory over all enemies seems to make degeneracy specially likely. A good despotism is certainly not the best form of government, but it can confer on a people many benefits. No one has ever found much to say in favour of a despotism that pursues merely personal aims and shows no ability.

Richard Cœur de Lion, who succeeded to all his father's dominions, has left a great name in romance, and, as no book on history is likely to be read so often, or remembered so well, as Scott's "Ivanhoe" and "Talisman," the Richard of romance is not likely to be replaced by the Richard of history. The Richard of romance, moreover, fearless, adventurous, generous, musician, and poet—represents part of the king's true character. He was a good knight-errant, but a bad king. His crusade and his captivity have been glanced at elsewhere, and they occupied most of his reign. The system that Henry II. had constructed showed its strength by keeping the country together during his absence, though at the end his brother John played the traitor again, and joined the King of France in an attack on the English power.

In 1199 a chance wound, received while he was besieging the castle of Chalus, resulted in Richard's death.

His brother John succeeded him. He had all the vices that characterized this strange Angevin family, and some that were peculiar to himself; nor were they redeemed **King John.** in his case by the energy, capacity, and high aims which we have observed in his father and brother. Some have thought that English constitutional liberties came too soon, but no one has found a word to say in defence of King John. The great fact of his reign is that the country rose in rebellion against him; no mere resistance this time of a few feudal nobles, disgusted that they were not allowed more power to do evil; but a real movement of large sections of the people, in which Norman and English were equally concerned.

What led to the revolt, and what made its success possible? The personal character of the king explains much, but by no means all. Two forces chiefly must be **The pre-** noted. First, military defeat and humiliation: **liminaries** **to Magna** secondly, a quarrel with the Church. The Norman **Carta.** kings were before all things war-lords. Victory in

battle had given them the crown of England; military strength had given them the control which they exercised over the land. In all periods a government is shaken to its foundations by serious military defeat; witness in our own day the ruins of the Hohenzollern, Hapsburg, and Romanoff dynasties! A defeated coward could hardly hope to sit on the throne of

**The** William the Conqueror. John lost Normandy, **loss of** the very foundation of the power of his race. **Normandy.** There sat on the French throne now Philip Augustus, one of the greatest of French kings, a man who resembled Henry II. of England in many ways. Against him John was quite outmatched, and his defeat was attended by disgrace. He lost the castle of Château Gaillard that Richard had built and loved; he murdered his nephew Arthur when he fell into his hands. Normandy fell into the power of France in 1204; Anjou, Maine, and Touraine in 1206; when John leagued himself with Otto, who was attempting to win the imperial crown against Frederick II. and Pope Innocent III., this only led to the disaster of Bouvines (1214). The

territories of the French Crown extended now to the mouths of the Loire and the Seine. The Angevin Empire was broken for ever. These events soon produced their effects in England. Many of the English barons had lands across the sea, and were injured by the failure of John's arms ; all must have had some sense of national humiliation, and a very clear feeling that it was not so dangerous to rebel against John as it had been against Henry and Richard.

John's relations with the Papacy and the Church were as unfortunate as with the French Crown. First there came a sharp conflict with the papacy about the appointment of an Archbishop of Canterbury. The monks attached to the cathedral had chosen one man ; the king in indignation had appointed another ; it was inevitable that the Pope should interfere to try and settle the dispute. He put aside both candidates and chose Stephen Langton, an Englishman and a cardinal, already well known for his learning and the purity of his life. King John was wild with fury at this action of the Pope, refused to allow Langton to enter the country, and laid hands on the revenues of the archbishopric. Pope Innocent III. was not the man to refuse the challenge. His counter-attack was a terrible one. He pronounced on the kingdom of England a solemn interdict which cut the whole realm off from the Catholic Church, and made intercourse with other nations difficult. Nor were more secular weapons wanting. The Pope urged the King of France to invade England, and the Welsh and the English saw in the king's difficulties with the Pope an opportunity for recovering their lost independence. John met these gathering dangers by an abject surrender. He promised to receive Stephen Langton ; he did more. He declared that England was a vassal of the Holy See, and did homage for it to the Pope. He promised large indemnities to the clergy and an annual subsidy to the Pope. So the Pope's anger was assuaged, and the king was absolved by Stephen Langton. But the consequences of the struggle remained. It was not forgotten that the king had been declared an enemy of the Church and of God.

The barons and people hated King John, and no longer feared him. The Church no longer supported him. When

the crowning disaster of Bouvines had come the storm broke. John found himself almost without support. There were preliminary meetings of the barons and their allies at St. Albans and in Saint Paul's Cathedral, and then the king had to meet the leaders at Runnymede, near Windsor. There the Great Charter of English Liberties was signed.

Magna Carta is a document of sixty-three clauses, and the greater number of them are concerned with the safeguarding of the privileges of the nobility, and here in many instances the interest of the commons was rather with the king than with his enemies. The chief points that concerned the realm as a whole are these: (1) If the king wanted any taxes beyond the ordinary feudal dues he was henceforth bound to call the Grand Council; and the form in which the summons was to be sent out was to be prescribed. The supremacy of the yet unborn House of Commons is derived from this article. (2) The liberties of the English Church are guaranteed, though not defined. (3) The rule of the common law of England is declared to cover all free men, "No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned save by the lawful judgement of his peers or by the law of the land." (4) The liberties of London and of the other towns and harbours of England were confirmed. To the king the most humiliating clause was the sixty-first, which established a commission of twenty-five barons to see that the provisions of the Charter were executed, and to enforce them if necessary by civil war.

The signing of Magna Carta was one of the great events of European history. Legends have gathered round it, and have exaggerated its features and obscured its meaning. It owes part of its modern fame to the lawyers of the seventeenth century, who found in it a basis, most useful but not quite historical, for their struggle against the Stuarts. But its importance remains. It did not guarantee trial by jury; it did not introduce the commons to political power; it was a feudal, not a popular document. But it is the basis of much that is most characteristic in the English constitution, and by its clauses, and even by the misinterpretation of them, bears

**Importance  
of the  
Great  
Charter.**

eloquent testimony to the continuity of the history of the constitution of England.

The immediate working of the Charter was not satisfactory. The king refused to abide by it, and was absolved from the need of observing his oath by Pope Innocent III. His opponents at once declared war, and invited Louis of France to come over and take the crown. He came, and there was every prospect of a long and destructive civil war that might have left an evil mark on England's destiny when John died in 1216.

#### IV

The movement that produced Magna Carta seemed then at first to have failed. It had lit the flames of civil war and had introduced a foreign prince into the land as a claimant for the English throne. It was not, however, really a failure, because it rested on permanent forces in the social life of the land. But its insufficiency was soon apparent. It became clear that it was not enough to exact a promise of good conduct from the king, and to threaten to enforce the promise by civil war. Perpetual vigilance is the price that has to be paid for liberty. If the people of England were to be either masters of the government of England, or partners in it, it would be necessary for them to have some permanent organization to represent and enforce their wishes. Hence, largely came the development of the English parliament into its later form.

Henry III. who succeeded was a better man than his father, but light of mind and weak of will. He was not anxious to prolong John's struggles against his **King** people, and the barons were willing to see if the **Henry III.** new king could be trusted. He issued in 1225 a new version of the Great Charter, omitting the clauses which made the consent of the Great Council necessary for the imposition of new taxes. The new version was, however, accepted without protest. It is noteworthy how the Charter was for this age the standard of its claims. So long as they were accepted all was well.

Blunders and failures in the foreign policy of the king, and crushing taxation at home as a result of them, caused the next great effort to control the royal power.

The king was unpopular because, soon after his accession to the throne, he had given his confidence to men of foreign origin, most of them relatives of his mother. We hear of protests against these men, who are called **Mistakes of Henry III.** favourites. They were hated not merely because they were foreigners, nor because they were supposed to have an evil influence on the king, but because they came between him and his nobles and his people. Ever since the Great Charter the barons and their allies had claimed to exercise a control over the government, and these "favourites" usurped the position which they thought ought to belong to the leaders of the English nobility. Under their influence the king embarked on a course of foreign policy that led to disaster. The papacy was engaged in its desperate struggle against the Hohenstaufen. Frederick II. was dead, and the popes were resolved that his hated race should be expelled entirely from Naples and Sicily. Henry was the ally of the popes, and they saw in him a useful instrument. Two rich prizes were dangled before his eyes. His brother Richard of Cornwall was to be emperor; his son Edmund was to succeed to the crown of Sicily. Had both plans succeeded they would hardly have added to the strength of the Crown or the nation. But after some promise of success both tailed. To support these claims Henry had exacted large sums from the Church and the people. The opponents of the king therefore had now no lack of support.

The party of the barons found a great leader in Simon de Montfort, Count of Leicester. He was the son of that de **Simon de Montfort.** Montfort who had played a prominent and cruel part in the suppression of the Albigensian heresy. He had been at first the king's friend and had married the king's sister; but then there had come quarrels which had never been quite made up. Simon was now the most active leader of the opponents of the monarchy. It is difficult to say what part was played in his career by personal hostility to the king, and what part by patriotism and a desire to establish an

effective government. He was a man of ideas, and his ideas reached beyond politics to the reform of the Church. The contemporary movement of the Friars, who were beginning to exercise much influence in England, helps to explain his aims.

In 1258 parliament met at Oxford and put forward demands, some of which anticipate the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Parliament was to meet three times a year, but was to consist of twelve delegates "to spare the cost of the commonalty." The king was to have a council of fifteen which was to control all his actions. The twelve men who represented parliament were to be in constant communication with the fifteen. If these provisions had been carried out the king would have abdicated into the hands of the nobility.

But the new form of government did not work well, and could not last. The barons quarrelled among themselves and showed no sign of regarding the interests of the commonalty. The Pope was not unmindful of his old ally, and absolved him from the oath that he had taken to observe the "Provisions of Oxford." Civil war broke out. In 1263 an effort was made to escape from the misery of the struggle by an appeal to the arbitration of the saintly King of France, Louis IX. It was impossible that a king of France in that age should approve of rebellious barons. Louis annulled the Provisions of Oxford. The barons refused to accept the decision, and war came again. At the battle of Lewes the king was defeated and taken prisoner. He still wore the crown, but it was Simon de Montfort who ruled England. In 1265 Simon took the step which more than anything else has made his name famous. He summoned a parliament of a new type—a body in which we see an approximation to the parliament which, with rare exceptions, has played the central part in English history down to our own time. Previous parliaments had been councils of barons; Simon de Montfort summoned every county and every borough to send representatives to consult with the barons and with the clergy. The counties and the towns had already occasionally sent spokesmen to discuss with the king details of business. But



Simon de Montfort's parliament was the first great council of the realm, where all sections of the community were represented, and where representatives of the counties and the towns met on an equal footing with the great barons and the churchmen.

From a distance we see the importance of the experiment, but it must have had a different look at the time. The country was not ready for it. Bitter quarrels broke out among Simon's noble allies; his power was attacked from the side of Wales. Edward, the king's son, who had been a prisoner since the battle of Lewes, escaped from captivity and joined with the rebels.

At Evesham Simon was defeated and slain (1265). All his work seemed undone. The nobles had to throw themselves on the king's mercy. At Kenilworth it was laid down that the king "was to exercise his dominion, authority, and royal power without hindrance or opposition." The Provisions of Oxford were annulled; but the king promised to abide by the charters to which he had voluntarily sworn, and this included the reissue of Magna Carta.

The country accepted the new state of things very quietly. So peaceable was it that Edward, the king's son, went off on a crusade and was still in the East when the king died in 1272.

It has been said that England has profited more by the follies and vices of her bad kings than by the virtues of her good ones. It is a very doubtful verdict! True, without the vices of King John there would have been no Magna Carta; without the weakness of Henry III. there would probably have been no such experiment in parliamentary government as we have just noted. But it was the strong and, on the whole, the just government of the Conqueror and of Henry II. that had built up the national unity which alone made a national parliament possible, and it was Edward I.—whom no one has ever called weak, and few would call bad—who put parliamentary government on a safe foundation. There is no more fundamentally important period in our history than the

Importance of Edward I.'s reign.

thirty-five years of Edward's reign. Neglecting chronological order, we will first see what he did to build up the fabric of parliament.

The parliament of Simon de Montfort had been the enemy of the royal power. There would have been nothing strange if Edward, now that the royal power was re-established, had made it his chief endeavour to extirpate parliamentary institutions in every form. It was the policy which the kings of France followed with regard to all institutions that threatened to check their power. It is the supreme merit of Edward I. that he saw that what had been an instrument of opposition could be made into a method of government, and that he voluntarily retained the partnership between king and people which had been forced upon his father and **The Model** grandfather. He made several experiments, but **Parliament**. the decisive step came in 1295, when he had been on the throne more than twenty years. He was engaged in difficult wars with the French and with the Scotch. At such a crisis a weaker man might have taken care to avoid all possibility of opposition at home. With wiser insight Edward chose this moment to call the people into full partnership. He summoned the Model Parliament, which followed the lines of Montfort's parliament of 1265, but gave to the people a complete representation. There came the earls and the barons, the bishops and the abbots; there came two representatives from every shire and from every borough; there came representatives of the lower clergy. "Common dangers," said the king, "should be met by measures agreed on in common." What the representation of England was in 1295, that it remained, with no essential modifications, down to 1832. Two years later Edward reaffirmed the basis on which parliamentary government has always rested. He confirmed the charters, and once more promised that no aids or taxes should be raised except by consent of parliament. Parliament has had its ups and downs, and its periods of eclipse as well as of power, but its assured position in the life of England dates from Edward's reign.

A few years later, in 1302, Philip IV. of France, in the heat of his struggle with the papacy, called into council the

States-General. He, too, asked a body which represented the clergy, the nobility, and the commons of France to support him in a struggle which seemed likely to tax all his powers. But the later history of the two bodies shows a wide contrast: the States-General seemed sometimes as if they were going to control the destinies of France, especially after the battle of Poitiers and at the beginning of the Reformation movement; but in the end they fell away and left the country in the hands of the monarchy. What are the causes of the wide difference?

Some of them are clear. The States-General were not so rooted in the life of the nation as parliament was with us. Simon de Montfort and Edward I. did but bring together and develop methods of common action that already existed, while Philip IV. imposed a wholly new form of institution upon the country. Secondly, while the English parliament came to be organized in the two chambers of Lords and Commons, the States-General were divided into the three chambers of Clergy, Nobility, and Commons. This seems at first sight a mere question of machinery; but the French system gave a preponderance to the two privileged classes—the nobility and the clergy—and prevented the States-General from becoming adequate representatives of the life of the nation as a whole. Thirdly, the French “States” never got that control of taxation which was the lever in the hands of parliament, and which at last gave it control of everything. In 1439 the French kings received the definite power of raising money for the maintenance of a standing army. Lastly, the influence of geography must not be forgotten. Defended by the seas, England could dispense with a standing army; and standing armies were fatal to the liberties of France. So the two nations went their different ways, and each had its own advantages.

## V

The thirteenth century had a great interest in problems of legislation. At the universities, which were springing into

existence on all sides, Roman law was being studied with reverent and almost superstitious care ; and the principles of Roman law (civil law, as it was called) were being widely adopted. In England there was no inclination to adopt them wholesale. The national customs were the basis of the administration of our law, and few wanted to make any essential changes ; but Roman law exercised on it a modifying influence, working for clearness of definition and logical relation of the parts. Edward I.'s chief interest was probably in legislation, and his chief effort was to give precision and order to the existing laws and customs of England. He has been called, with exaggeration, the English Justinian ; but he deserves the praise that Dante bestowed upon Justinian : he took from the laws what was redundant and meaningless. Naturally, too, he had always an eye on the strengthening of the authority of the Crown. A good deal of his legislation, though not all, falls into line with the tendency of the time to undermine the power of feudalism. The chief statutes may be summarily noticed.

In 1278, by the Statute of Gloucester, he made a definite attack on the feudal nobles by instituting an inquiry into the ground or warrant on which their judicial rights were based. This provoked, however, such an outcry that the attack was not pressed home. The feudal courts were being undermined in other ways. The itinerant judges were one of the chief of these, and their circuits were regulated and their powers increased by Edward.

By the Statute of Mortmain, in 1279, it was forbidden to make any further grants of lands to the Church without the express permission of the king. This did not imply any hostility to the Church, for the king was a Crusader and a loyal son of the Church. The king's motives were political and financial. Lands in the power of the Church were exempt from these feudal payments, which were an important element in the revenues of the Crown. Later, in 1285, the king limited the subjects that could be handled in ecclesiastical courts.

There are two important statutes dealing with land tenure. In 1285 there came one usually known as *De Donis Condition-*  
*De Donis* *alibus*, the effect of which was to allow a landowner  
*Condition-* to ensure that his lands should descend undivided  
*alibus.* from eldest son to eldest son; to "entail" them according to the legal phrase. A prominent and questionable feature of our land system is largely derived from this Act.

*Quia* In 1290 the statute *Quia Emptores* forbade  
*Emptores.* "subinfeudation." That is, it laid down that if a landowner alienated or sold any land the new owner became the vassal of the seller's lord, not of the seller. It had somewhat the same effect as William the Conqueror's famous Moot of Salisbury.

## VI

Edward I.'s reign was full of wars, and they have left a permanent mark on the history of England. He  
 The wars of fought against France, against Wales, against  
 Edward I. Scotland. The wars are closely related to one another, but may be separately treated here.

While the English king possessed Gascony there was always likely to be trouble with France, where national feeling was growing. The friction was increased when Edward inherited through his wife the territory of Ponthieu, on the lower Somme. Hence came war with France's violent monarch Philip IV.; but war that led to little change. Edward did not want to add to his troubles at home the complication of a foreign war. In 1299 he made peace, and married the French king's sister.

Far more important were his wars in Wales. The Welsh found a fine leader in Prince Llewelyn, and it took several  
 Wars in years of hard fighting before Edward could enforce  
 Wales. his will on his brave enemies. In the end the land of Llewelyn was divided into counties, and brought under the king's direct rule. The border districts were still left in the hands of the feudal lords. The new settlement was defined in the Statute of Wales (1284).

The Scotch war was the most important of all, and seemed

to promise the best results. Edward I. seemed before his death to have incorporated Scotland with the The Scotch domains of the English Crown. When Alexan- wars.  
der III. died in 1286, the heir to the throne was his grand-daughter, who is known as Margaret, the Maid of Norway. Here was a chance of bringing the two countries into peaceable union. The Maid was betrothed to Edward's son, who had just been declared Prince of Wales. The union of the crowns seemed secure ; the independence of the peoples was wisely provided for. But Margaret died in 1290.

The succession to the Scotch throne was now a difficult question, and the claimants consented to submit it to the arbitration of Edward I., who established a court to go into the matter. John Balliol was chosen, and did homage to the English king. A satisfactory solution seemed to have been reached.

But the solution proved far from satisfactory. The Scotch resented the recognition of English overlordship, and Balliol had to make himself the spokesman of their The first feeling. War came, and Edward invaded and conquest of conquered. Balliol resigned the crown. Edward Scotland.  
declared Scotland annexed to the crown of England. Was this the end ?

It was by no means the end. Scotch national feeling was only increased by defeat, as was to be seen again and again in Scotch history. It found a representative in Sir Sir William William Wallace, and he defeated the English Wallace.  
Governor of Scotland at Stirling Bridge in 1297. King Edward had to come himself. He defeated Wallace at Falkirk in 1298, and when some years later Wallace reappeared in Scotland, he was taken prisoner and executed. But a new leader appeared in Robert Bruce, who was crowned Robert King of Scotland. Edward found it necessary Bruce.  
again to march against Scotland, but he died on the road thither in 1307, leaving the Scotch question unsettled and critical.

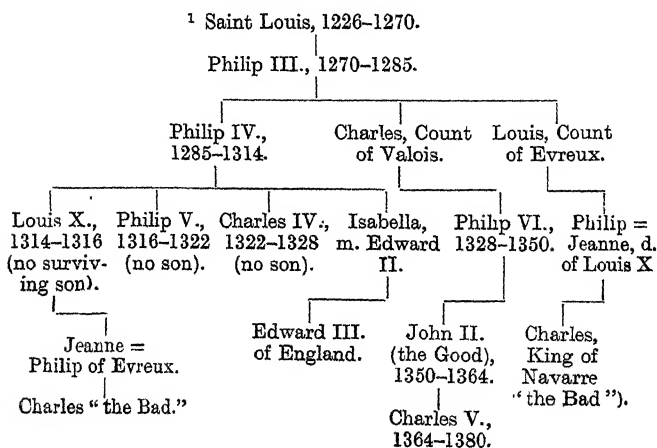
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The following books may be noted from among the vast literature that deals with the period covered in this chapter. Freeman's *William the Conqueror*; Mrs. J. R. Green's *Henry II.*; T. F. Tout's *Edward I.*; Green's *Short History of the English People*; Volumes II. and III. of the *Political History of England* by G. B. Adams and T. F. Tout respectively. Stubbs' *Constitutional History of England* and his *Select Charters*.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## The Hundred Years' War

ON the death of Philip IV. of France there was no lack of descendants in the royal line. There were three sons, and besides these a daughter, Isabella, who was married to Edward II. of England. An unchallenged succession seemed assured; but France was soon involved in one of the greatest struggles that has ever arisen out of a disputed succession. For the three sons of Philip IV.—Louis X., Philip V., and Charles IV.—died one after the other, not indeed childless, but without male heirs. On the death of Charles IV., therefore, in 1328, the question of the descent of the crown was a really difficult one. Edward III. of England was the male in nearest direct descent from Philip IV. Charles “the Bad” of Navarre was the grandson of Philip IV.’s eldest son: Philip, soon to be Philip VI., was the nephew of Philip IV.<sup>1</sup>



There was plenty of room for legal disputes. To exclude the claim of Edward III., a clause was produced from the laws of the Salian Franks with regard to landed property which said: "Of Salic land no portion of the inheritance shall come to a woman, but the whole inheritance of the land shall come to the male sex"; and it was maintained that this rule of inheritance, which applied to landed property in one branch of the Franks at the beginning of their history, applied for all time to the inheritance of the crown of the King of France. But the question was not a legal one. The "Salic Law" was the excuse, but the real motive was the desire to keep the crown of France from the hands of a foreigner, and thus to preserve the national independence of the country.

The Hundred Years' War was a struggle arising chiefly from the rivalry of the only two strong national states of Europe Germany, since the fall of the Hohenstaufen, was divided and ineffective both for politics and war. France Italy was only a geographical expression. Spain did not exist as a state, and the different Christian kingdoms of Spain held their own with difficulty against the forces of Islam. But England possessed national unity and an effective organization. Thanks to the wisdom of Edward I., Crown and Parliament worked in efficient co-operation, and the means of creating a powerful armed force existed. France had not achieved such complete unity as England, but over a large stretch of country the king ruled with unquestioned authority, and the nobles were no longer rivals and independent powers in any part of the country. In the fourteenth century war was undertaken very lightly, and the jealousies of kings were always apt to produce war as soon as the kings possessed power. For over a hundred years the two royal houses struggled, with intervals of peace, for the possession of the crown and territories of France.

Froissart has described the early stages of the war in the most brilliant of chronicles. The joy of fighting and the glory and pageantry of war are given with a brightness of colour hardly to be matched outside of the pages of Homer. But the historian must give a very different



account of it. It was one of the most terrible of wars in its social consequences. While the knights of England and of France were winning glory and exhibiting the graces and the virtues of chivalry on the battle-field, the country was pillaged mercilessly; the soldiers, high and low, exhibited the most brutal savagery; France, in the words of one of her historians, "passed through the flames of Hell."

The war was a savage conflict of two great rival powers. But there were excuses for the outbreak of the struggle more serious than the question of the validity of the Salic law. Edward III. was at war with Scotland, and France was in alliance with the Scots. The French king was suspected of designs on Guienne,

which Edward III. held as a fief of the French king. But the chief immediate cause was to be found in Flanders. England and Flanders were intimately connected by commercial ties. Flanders was the one great centre of the woollen industry in Europe, and the best wool came from England. Just at this time the King of France had joined with the Count of Flanders (for there was a Count of Flanders

again since the failure of Philip IV.'s attempt to annex the country) in crushing the turbulent citizens of the great towns. There followed another outbreak in Flanders under Jacob van Artevelde of Ghent, and the insurgents entered into friendly relations with the English king, who thus gained valuable allies and an excellent base for an attack on France. The success of the war depended throughout very largely on the allies whom England could procure. Her early successes were the result of the support of Flanders and the adjacent districts of Brabant and Hainault. And a hundred years later the ruin of England in the war came when these lands, then united under the rule of the Duke of Burgundy, transferred their allegiance to the King of France.

The first phase of the war showed brilliant and uninterrupted success for England, and her victories were often won against great odds. For England was a great innovator in methods of warfare. Her army was gathered by voluntary enlistment for wage, and had none of the disorder of the

feudal levy. The Black Prince was a great commander, swift to seize the favourable opportunity in the crisis of a battle, daring in the adoption of new methods, as when at Crecy and at Poitiers he caused his knights to leave their horses and fight on foot, skilful in planning a battle, if not in arranging a campaign. Above all, in the long bow the English army possessed a weapon of dreadful efficiency. The Continental armies had nothing equal to it. It had a longer range and a greater penetrating power than the crossbow which was used by the French archers. It produced a more immediate revolution in war than the invention of gunpowder.

War was declared in 1337. It was one of the slow moving wars which stand in such marked contrast with the rapidity and continuity of modern campaigns. Want of money often brought operations to an end just when we should have expected something decisive. For twenty years the English arms had hardly a serious check. The naval fight off Sluys (1340) demonstrated and assured the naval superiority of the English. In 1346 King Edward III. and the Black Prince landed at La Hogue and marched towards Calais. The French army, superior in numbers and confident of victory, came up with them at Crecy. In the great battle which followed the feudal chivalry of France, with undisciplined courage, flung themselves on the strong defensive position which the English had taken up. It is said that the English used cannon; but if so they were of little service. It was the long bow that did the work. The arrows seem to have penetrated even the mail of the knights, and upon the bodies of the horses they fell with murderous effect. The English gained their victory with insignificant loss. The siege of Calais followed—a long and cruel blockade, in which famine at last gave the English the town. The inhabitants were expelled, English settlers were introduced, and for the future the English would always possess the gate of their enemies.

There was an interval of comparative quiet after this, due largely to the ravages of the Black Death. In 1355 the Black Prince conducted campaigns in Guienne and enlarged the

English frontiers there. In 1356, laden with booty, he was intercepted near Poitiers by a much larger army under King

**Poitiers.** John, who had succeeded to the throne in 1350.

John the Good he is called, his "goodness" being according to the standard of feudal chivalry; for he was an evil ruler for France, and her sufferings during the following years were largely due to his weak rule. The features of Crecy were repeated; on the one side complete self-confidence and a fierce onslaught; on the other, a carefully chosen defensive position, the archers the chief arm, and a repulse turned into a rout by an attack at the right moment. King John "the Good" himself fell a prisoner into the hands of the English and was taken to London.

Disaster, financial distress, the horrible pestilence of the Black Death and the excesses of the bands of mercenary soldiers, who wandered about the country, filled

**Stephen** up the cup of the misery of France. And it seemed  
**Marcel** that from the extremity of her disaster would arise  
**and the** a revolution in her government. Paris fell into  
**Revolution** the power of Stephen Marcel, Provost of the  
**of Paris.**

Merchants, a remarkable man who came near to leaving a great name in the annals of his native land and of Europe. He joined with Charles of Navarre ("Charles the Bad") and projected a new scheme of government which would have brought the political development of France into close resemblance to that of England. His ideas were embodied in the ordinances of 1357, which amount to the establishment

of representative government in France. The  
**The** States-General were to play the part of the English  
**States-**  
**General.** Parliament. They were to meet frequently and

were to control the taxation of the country. The English were to be driven out of the land by a national army, which was to be raised by a general conscription and universal obligation to military service. These ideas are prophetic of a distant future; but it is doubtful if they could have been realized in the France of the fourteenth century. Charles of Navarre gave Marcel hesitating support: the Dauphin Charles, who ruled during the imprisonment of his father, had the national feeling of France on his side, and the revolutionary

movement was strong only in Paris. The tumultuous outbreaks of the peasants (the Jacquerie) showed the dangers of disorder. Marcel was killed and Paris surrendered to the Dauphin. There was no further attempt to take the conduct of the war from the control of the crown.

In 1360 King John accepted the Peace of Bretigni whereby King Edward III. abandoned his claim to the French throne, but received in full sovereignty, without homage or allegiance of any sort, the large district of Aquitaine to the south of the Loire, as well as Calais and the neighbouring district. It seemed a great victory for the English king; but it was soon to pass away like smoke.

In 1364 John "the Good" died, and his son Charles V. succeeded. The fate of France must have seemed more precarious than ever when it depended upon this weak, ill-shapen, unwarlike king. But he proved, <sup>King</sup> Charles V. in fact, a far more effective ruler than his rash and <sup>and Du</sup> empty-headed father. He was fortunate in dis- <sup>Guesclin.</sup> covering Du Guesclin—a Breton knight—who soon displayed military talents of the very highest kind, and showed great skill in adapting his methods to meet the peculiar strength of the English. He gave them no further chance of winning another Crecy or Poitiers. He fought war in grim earnest and not as a knightly sport. He "kicked at the belly" by devastating the country through which the English were to pass and taking refuge within walled towns. The French won no days of glory like those which had fallen to the lot of the English, and twice Du Guesclin fell into the hands of the Black Prince. But the English possessions constantly diminished. Heavy taxation had made the Black Prince unpopular even in Guienne. In 1372 a little known but very im- <sup>Battle</sup> portant battle off La Rochelle ended in a naval <sup>of La</sup> victory for France. When Edward III. died in <sup>Rochelle.</sup> 1377, nothing remained in English hands except Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne and the lands in the immediate neighbourhood of these towns.

At the death of Edward III. the military outlook for France was much brighter, but she was still the prey of grave social evils. Du Guesclin had employed against the English

“companies” of mercenary soldiers—raised by promise of pay and booty, directly subordinate to their commanders, and far more efficient than the old armies of the kings of France, penetrated as they were by the spirit of feudalism. But though these “companies” were efficient in war, they were almost as dreadful a scourge to the country as the enemy himself. For in time of peace they spread over the country, plundering the peaceful inhabitants, and in some places a fresh army had to be raised against them, and at one time a crusade was even declared against them. Charles V.—Charles the Sage he is often called—died in 1380, leaving a son, Charles VI., only eleven years old. So, first, there were all the troubles that belong to a regency, and then, when Charles VI. came of age, other and worse troubles soon showed themselves. The king was stricken with madness. He recovered at times, but it would have been better for France if the clouds had settled permanently upon him, for then some stable government might have been established through a regency. As it was, France became the prey of furious factions which claimed the right to rule the country in his name.

These parties are usually labelled the Burgundians and the Armagnacs. They were the followers of two princes of the blood royal who each claimed the right of exercising the government in the King’s name. It was a great disaster for France that there was any Duke of Burgundy at all, and that there was one was due to the unwise action of King John the Good. For in 1362 the old house of Burgundy had come to an end, and its territories had fallen to the crown. They should have been annexed to the royal domain; but John gave them with the Ducal title to his son Philip the Bold, who alone had stood by his father on the disastrous field of Poitiers. From him were to come for four generations the most dangerous rivals and enemies of the French crown.

Philip the Bold of Burgundy claimed the Regency as uncle of Charles VI., and at his death his claim was taken over by his son, John the Fearless. His claims were resisted by the King’s brother Louis, Duke of Orleans, and when the Duke

of Orleans had been murdered in 1407, his cause and the cause of his party was espoused by the Count of Armagnac, the father-in-law of the new duke, who was not old enough to fight for himself. There are few more savage contests than this between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs, though it finds a close parallel in the feuds of the Yorkists and Lancastrians in our own country. **Nature of the new civil war.** It was a struggle for power and the wealth that power brings, but each gave to their cause some show of principle. The Armagnacs were associated with the feudal nobility of France, and found their strongest support in the south. The Duke of Burgundy allied himself with the democracy of the city of Paris and with the merchant classes of the other northern cities; but it was an alliance that sprang merely from a common enmity; for the Burgundians were equally ready to ally themselves with the feudal nobles when it served their turn to do so. The rivalry of these two princely houses led to fierce civil war. Paris fell into the power of a revolutionary party; but despite the support of the Burgundians it was reconquered by the Armagnacs. They controlled the King and the Dauphin, and victory seemed in their grasp, when in 1413 there came another acute crisis in the war with England.

Henry V. was on the throne of England, young, ardent, ambitious, anxious for a military success which should make his people forget how weak was his claim to the **Henry V. of England.** He invaded France, conquered Harfleur after very great loss, and then, with an army sadly thinned by war and disease, he marched towards Calais, hoping to re-embark there for England. A great French army crossed his path at Agincourt. The English were saved from a situation of the greatest peril by the skill of their **Agincourt,** king and the courage and discipline of the troops; **1415.** but also by the faulty tactics and masterless confusion of the enemy. They attacked as at Crecy and Poitiers, and it was no advantage under the circumstances that the knights had dismounted and fought on foot. The English archers did their deadly work, and Henry V. gained an even more overwhelming victory than those which had fallen to the lot of the Black Prince.

France fell lower and lower. The Dauphin quarrelled violently with his mother. The civil war of the factions showed no sign of abatement. Efforts at reconciliation only provided opportunities for assassination. The Burgundians made themselves master of Paris; and in 1418 John the Good, Duke of Burgundy, in order to avenge his father's murder, made hearty alliance with the English. Thus supported, Henry rapidly advanced in the conquest of Normandy, and his success was sealed in 1420 by the Treaty of Troyes. He was to marry Catherine, daughter of the imbecile King Charles VI., and was to rule France as Regent for the present, and as King at the death of Charles VI. The Duke of Burgundy was rewarded for his support by a declaration of the independence of those territories which he had hitherto held as a fief of the crown of France. Next year, Henry V. entered Paris. A career of unlimited possibilities seemed opening before him, when in 1422 he died.

Charles VI. died in the same year, and he was succeeded by his son Charles VII.—Charles the Victorious, as he was called at last—Charles the well-served, as he has been more justly styled. The English victories continued unabated. Victories in the south of Normandy and the upper course of the Seine seemed to confirm the alliance with Burgundy and to open the way to an attack on the centre and south of France, where alone Charles VII. now had any serious following. The only sign of hope for France was seen in the difficulties that arose between England and Burgundy; for the Burgundian alliance was the pivot of the English triumph, and in 1425 it seemed endangered by the effort of Humphrey of Gloucester to secure possessions in Hainault by a marriage with the heiress. This quarrel was, however, patched up, and in 1428 the English advanced to the siege of Orleans. They built forts at the gates of the city and though they did not encircle it by continuous lines of blockade, it seemed certain that famine would soon give the city to the English, and with the city the means of striking at the centre and south of France. It seemed that the French monarchy was close to its ruin.

Alliance  
of the Bur-  
gundians  
with the  
English.

Charles  
VII. "le  
victorieux"  
or "le bien  
servi."

Then Joan of Arc arose. Our knowledge of her career is drawn from evidence that is singularly good and full; but scrutiny, if it dispenses with miracle, does not lessen the wonder of it. She was an ignorant and pious peasant girl, and she had no experience of war; and yet she showed not only a contagious courage and enthusiasm, but also made suggestions that might have come from an experienced soldier. She believed herself divinely commissioned to relieve Orleans and to crown the King at Rheims, which lay in the heart of the country which was at the time of her coming in possession of the enemy. Both French and English came to believe that there was something supernatural in her, and this accounts for the change from the depths of depression to confidence on the side of France, and a corresponding and opposite change on the side of the English. Her career was a short one, and not so decisive as it is sometimes represented. Orleans was relieved, and the confidence of the English rudely shaken. The king was crowned at Rheims, and thus the mission, which "the voices" of which she spoke had confided to her, was accomplished. She remained unwillingly with the armies, and what followed was a dismal anti-climax. The king gave her poor support, and, like his generals, was probably jealous of her. The French army was driven off from an attack on Paris, though if Joan's advice had been taken the city would probably have fallen. Then she was captured in an attempt to relieve Compiegne. There is no more pitiful tragedy than the story how she was sold by her Burgundian captors to the English; and how a court, presided over by the Bishop of Beauvais under English influence, found her guilty of witchcraft. Her life was at first promised her; but on the ground that she had resumed her male attire she was sentenced to death as a relapsed heretic, and was burned professing to the last faith in "the voices" that had guided her.

She had done much, but much remained to be done. The English grasp on France was loosened but not shaken off. The Burgundian alliance was still the key of the position, and Duke John the Fearless was again irritated with his



English allies because he thought they were aiming at acquiring power within his own dominions. In 1435 he took the final step, and by the Peace of Arras separated himself from the English and made peace with the King of France; his dominions were increased, and he was to be free during his whole life from any feudal dependence on the crown of France.

**Burgundy makes peace with France.**

In England, meanwhile, there was no government and no statesman capable of meeting the difficulty. The dismemberment which she had brought upon France seemed coming to her: the bitter strife of factions had begun, which was to lead later to the Wars of the

**Reorganization of France.**

Roses. France, encouraged by the prospect of success, turned to the reorganization of the state with confidence and energy. In 1436 Paris was reoccupied by Charles VII. He was well served to the end, and his chief servants came from the ranks of the merchant class. One such man, Jean Bureau, took in hand the artillery of the French army, and soon it came to be the best in Europe, and was more than an adequate counterpoise to the English archers in the remaining stages of the fighting. Another servant, Jacques Cœur of Bourges, laboured to reform the finances of France. It was

**The Pragmatic Sanction.**

an appalling task, for the country seemed sunk in chaos and misery. The Pragmatic Sanction of 1438 was a financial help to France, for while Councils were declared superior to the Pope, and the Church was allowed to choose her own officials, certain large payments which had hitherto been made to the Pope were refused, and some of them found their way to the king's treasury. More directly important measures came in 1439, when a famous ordinance was issued by the king, dealing with the organization of the army (*ordonnance sur la gendarmerie*).

**The ordinance of 1439.**

In this measure it was not so much the English war that was thought of, for there was a breathing space in that; but rather the bands of brigands, or *écorceurs*, who traversed France in large numbers and made life insupportable except within the walls of a town. These men were disbanded soldiers from the mercenary companies, men of many nationalities and all classes, who now plundered

with deliberation and organization the country they had been hired to save. The one means to meet this and most other evils seemed to Frenchmen in the fifteenth century to be an increase in the authority of the crown. So with general support the great ordinance was issued. The *taille*, a tax hitherto levied by the nobles on their estates—a tax on property, on land, and on houses—was transferred to the crown and was to be devoted to the raising of a standing army. No one was to be allowed to raise troops without licence from the king, and all captains were to be nominated by him. It was an ordinance of far greater scope than was suspected at the time. It was effective against the brigands, and gave the king an efficient army when the war against England was renewed. But it also proved a potent instrument for the advancement and enforcement of the royal power. The kings of France henceforth had the power of collecting a tax that was elastic, and could be made to raise great sums of money; and this tax could be used to maintain a standing army. What the kings of England never won—the right to tax and the right to maintain a standing army—was given willingly to the kings of France! This of itself does not by any means explain why France became an absolute monarchy, and England, despite all checks, worked forward to parliamentarism. The geography and the primitive institutions of the two races were potent influences on their divergent growth. But the ordinance of 1439 was an important step, and it was never recalled until the monarchy disappeared in the storms of the revolution of 1789.

War with England came again in 1439. Normandy rebelled against the English and was supported by the forces of the crown. Rouen was taken, and then the English made their last stand at Formigny (1450). Their defeat gave the whole of the north of France, with the exception of Calais, into the hands of the French. Then in 1453 Guienne came over to France. Bordeaux almost alone held out for England. A last effort was made to recover some of the lost ground, when the veteran Talbot led out an army. At Castillon (1453) the last battle of the Hundred Years' War was fought. The last picture that we get of the

fighting is characteristic. The English archers failed. The English knights charged with stubborn courage, but they were swept down by the new artillery that Bureau had given to France.

The long duel was over. If we did not remember the character of the century and the light way in which the rulers undertook wars we could not condemn too strongly the action of England which had filled France for a century with every kind of evil. England paid for her action in the Wat Tyler and Jack Cade rebellions, perhaps in the Black Death, certainly in the Wars of the Roses. France had gained her great victory, and had expelled the English from all France with the exception of Calais, because a genuine national spirit arose in the country which made the inhabitants feel the English dominion a hateful foreign oppression.

Charles VII. prolonged his glorious reign to 1461; but he had personally contributed very little to its glory, and the last years of his reign showed that though the old feudalism had lost its power to harm, the nobles were still restless and hostile to the royal authority. Their claims were supported by the Dauphin, afterwards the famous Louis XI. But the royal forces dispersed them. The Dauphin took refuge with the Duke of Burgundy, and Charles VII. died in peace.

His reign shows us how little the development of the monarchy was due to the ambitions or the powers of the individual kings. It was the nation that was concentrated in the monarchy and found there a truer representative than the States-General or the Parlement afforded. It has been said of the next century in Europe generally that "the true Messiah was the king." France had learnt to look for salvation to the monarchy a century earlier.

"Le  
nouveau  
Messie  
c'est le  
roi."

Besides the great histories of France, Froissart's *Chronicles*; Andrew Lang, *Maid of Orleans*; Ashley, *James and Philip van Artevelde*.

## CHAPTER XIX

## The Catholic Church in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

WITH the election of Clement V. and his adoption of Avignon as the papal residence, the history of the Church enters on a new and well-defined phase. It had been for centuries the most important force in the making of the history of Europe; it had aspired to rule in political as well as in spiritual matters all the states of Western Europe, and it had come near to realizing its ambition. But with the victory of Philip IV. of France there came a great change. The claims of the popes were as high as they ever had been; the language of Gregory VII., and Innocent III. still flowed from their lips; but they hardly dreamed of realizing their claims. The secular powers triumphed. There were three clear stages through which the Church passed in this period. First the popes lived as exiles in France within the control of the French kings. This was the period of the "Babylonish Captivity." Next, no sooner was the papacy restored to Italy than there broke out a schism in the Church by the election of rival popes, and no way was found to heal this schism except by an appeal to great councils of the Church. This was the period of the Conciliar movement. The papacy emerged from that movement with less weakening of its power than at one time seemed likely. The popes resided in Rome again, and their authority within the Church was not curbed by any constitutional checks. But they regained their theoretical supremacy by abandoning much of their actual power in the states beyond the Alps. They built up for themselves a strong power in Italy and devoted themselves to the politics of the peninsula. This marked the third phase before the storm of the Reformation broke—the phase of the papacy as an Italian power.

The triumph of the secular powers.

Phases in the development of the papacy.

Seven popes reigned in Avignon, and they found their residence there extremely agreeable. The city belonged at first to the Count of Provence, but it was bought by the papacy, and the popes possessed there more personal freedom than had been possible amidst the ambitious nobles and turbulent people of Rome. When the papal court moved back again to Rome, the cardinals complained loudly of the vulgar and sordid character of the city, and regretted the luxurious civilization of Avignon. The popes at Avignon were bound to the king of France, and they thus lost the independent position in Europe on which their *prestige* had depended. But they made up by the vehemence of their claims for what they lost in real power. The empire still claimed to be the first of the secular powers; though we shall see in the next chapter how weak a thing the empire had become. The popes claimed now quite definitely that the Pope was suzerain over the empire, and that when the Imperial throne was vacant the popes acted of right as regents. But their claims were met on the Imperial side with a stout denial. The situation naturally produced fierce controversy and subtle discussion on the nature of the state, on the source of authority within the state, on the relation of the spiritual and the temporal powers. Dante had a few years before asserted in his *De Monarchia* the necessity of a supreme secular ruler to control the anarchy and misery of Italy. Now, in 1327, Marsiglio of Padua, once a teacher at the university of Paris, on behalf of the Emperor Lewis IV. declared in the *Defensor Pacis* that the Pope was the source and fountain of all discords; and that the head of the Church should use persuasion only, and should lay no claim to any power of compulsion. The Imperial claims, too, went beyond the domain of theory. It was declared that he whom the German electors chose was king of the Romans and prospective emperor, and stood in no need of papal confirmation. The Emperor Lewis made his way to Rome and was there crowned by the Pope's enemies. The old controversy existed, but it no longer produced the disturbances and the wars of former times.

The  
Baby-  
lonish  
captivity.

Contro-  
versies as  
to Church  
and State.

There was another feature in the life of the papal court of Avignon which seemed at the time a great success and nevertheless was sowing the seeds of future disaster. The luxurious life of the city entailed great expenses, and the protection of the king of France took away much of the sense of responsibility which was felt in Rome. New methods of making money were discovered, and the result was a full papal treasury. Papal dispensations were lavishly distributed and in effect sold at a high figure. The popes claimed the right to appoint to ecclesiastical offices of various degrees, and those who were appointed made payments to the Pope; most important of all, the revenues of vacant benefices were claimed for the papal exchequer. No wonder that residence at Avignon was so pleasant; but the luxury, vice, and iniquity of the papal court became proverbial throughout Europe; and the papacy was thus losing the very foundations of its real strength. The protection, too, of the king of France had its dangers and drawbacks. The enemies of France refused obedience to the papacy which they regarded as an agency of France. England, at war with France, refused to contribute to the papal funds, and checked the papal extortions to which we have alluded by Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire.

In the papal states of Italy, too, there were grave disorders. The absence of the papal court allowed the petty princes to raise their heads and assume independence. Civil war was constant in the land. Nor must we omit to note that there were other and worthier impulses urging to return. The religious life of the time seems to have sunk low. The Friars were torn by disputes, and many of them were now the eager champions of Imperial claims. But the religious life of Europe was not dead. The most attractive figure of the time is Saint Catherine of Siena, and she used all her influence to urge the return of the papacy to Rome. At last, in 1377, Pope Gregory XI. was induced to make the move. The abandonment of the luxuries of Avignon and the return to her ancient capital seemed a good omen for the future of the Church. But when Gregory XI. died in 1378 a worse danger and a graver scandal appeared.

The papal election was held amidst great tumult. The crowds outside demanded "a Roman Pope, or at least an Italian." Urban VI., who was elected, was a Neapolitan, and was thought at first likely to return to Avignon. He did not do so; but he was a proud, headstrong, irascible man, and opposition soon grew up against him. The cardinals in the French interest met together and declared that the previous election was invalid owing to confusion and violence; and they chose another Pope who took the title of Clement VII. He was known as a man of determined temper, but he made little headway in Italy and retired to Avignon. There was clear schism in the Church.

It was not the first time by any means that the Church had suffered from schism; but this was far the longest and the most important of all the schisms that the Church has known. There was a succession of Urbanist popes in Rome and a succession of Clementist popes in Avignon. Not until 1417 was Christendom reunited again. Moreover, the division in the Church was associated with and partly caused by violent divisions among the states of Europe; and the relation of the various powers to each of the two claimants was determined by political considerations. The Urbanists had the greater amount of support; England, Italy, and Germany stood for them. France and Scotland were the main supports of the Clementists, though they later secured the adhesion of most of Spain.

The scandal and the evil of the schism were very great. There was nothing to which the best intellects of Europe in the fourteenth century held so firmly as the need of unity in the Church. Upon that depended all assurance of the validity of the sacraments and consolations of the Church. Nor was the evil one that only concerned religion and theology. Two papal courts, intriguing against one another, rival claimants for money, rival diplomatists in every state, were a burden and a danger of the most serious kind. There was entire unanimity of feeling that this scandal should be brought to an end as soon as possible.

But how to bring it to an end? The simplest way was that one or both of the popes should be induced to abdicate. But they and their cardinals were in possession of posts of honour and wealth; and abdication would be a confession of wrongdoing. So, though popes before their election might declare themselves ready to abdicate, they one and all clung tightly to their office when they gained it. Pressure of some sort would have to be put upon them from the outside. The situation seemed to call for another Charlemagne or another Otto; but the empire was weak, and for a long time was itself perplexed by rival claimants. France had on hand the war with England. The schism was healed in the end by the action of the emperor, when the empire became, if not strong, at least stronger than in the time of its division. But first great efforts were made to close the rent in the Church by action from the inside.

The universities of Europe were rising in influence; but none was so powerful as the university of Paris. Its school of theology, especially, was one of the most powerful intellectual influences in the fourteenth century. The university of Paris was from the first concerned to end the schism, and through its Chancellor Gerson and others urged the advisability of summoning a council of the Church. The growth of the papal monarchy had gone far to efface the memory of councils as a means of governing the Church; but it seemed now that the instrument which had settled early heresies and divisions in the Church might be effective in dealing with this new scandal of a schism.

At last, in 1409, through the action of a large body of the cardinals, a council was called at Pisa. It was impressive by reason of its numbers and the eminence of its members, but it was difficult to say from whom it derived authority, and how it justified its claim to be regarded as the voice of Christendom. It proceeded without much hesitation to its work. The two reigning Popes, Benedict XIII. and Gregory XII., were summoned to appear, and on their failure they were declared heretics and contumacious, and deposed. The cardinals of the



Conference now proceeded to the election of a new Pope, and chose an old man of Greek origin, who took the title of Alexander V.

Was the scandal of the schism over? It quickly appeared that it had been increased. Three popes reigned instead of two. For neither Benedict nor Gregory accepted their deposition, and the council of Pisa had not sufficient control of force to make them resign. The new Pope lived only for a few months and died in 1410, urging the cardinals almost with his last breath to "seek peace and ensue it." The Pisan cardinals chose John XXIII. to succeed him, a man of restless ambition, great energy, and notoriously dissolute life. He was not likely to contribute to the pacification of the Church.

But the scandal was too great, and the practical evils flowing from it too obvious for the matter to rest there. All the abuses that have been mentioned in connection with "the Babylonish captivity" were increased during the schism. The divorce between religion and morality seemed complete. In Italy the disorder was very great; and the conflicts of cities and of factions, there and elsewhere, was carried on with a fierce ambition and a ferocious cruelty difficult to parallel in all history. All Europe cried for the restoration of Catholic unity. In Germany, meanwhile, political unity had at last been restored. For some time there had been three candidates for the Imperial power; but now (1410) Sigismund at last won the position and reigned without challenge. The empire was not by any means a powerful political and military force (more of this in the next chapter); but Sigismund ruled in Hungary and Bohemia, and there was not on the Continent at the moment any stronger power. Bohemia was harassed by the religious movement which had been founded by Huss, acting on the ideas of Wyclif. Sigismund was not a great or a strong man; he was possessed by an ambition that was often fantastic and absurd; but for the present his practical interests as well as his desire to play a great part in the eyes of men, urged him to attempt the task of restoring unity to the Church.

John XXIII. appealed to him to make the attempt and thought that he would find in the emperor a pliant tool. But Sigismund threw himself into the work with an independent energy which at once alarmed the Pope. He chose Constance as the seat of the council, which was to carry on to success the work of the council of Pisa, though the Pope would have preferred an Italian town which would have been more completely within his influence. He had to acquiesce in the choice of Constance, but he regarded it from the first as a "trap to catch foxes."

Sigismund  
summons  
the Council  
of Con-  
stance.

To Constance, then, there came great crowds of priests, bishops, cardinals, as well as of laymen, from all parts of Europe; though Italy sent far more representatives than any other single nation. The task to which they addressed themselves was threefold. They wished to restore unity to the Church; to repress heresy; and to effect a general reform of the abuses of the Church. John XXIII. had hoped that he would be taken as the symbol of Catholic unity, and that, while the rival popes would be deposed, he would be generally recognized. But he was quickly undeceived. The resignation of all three popes was insisted on, and John XXIII. struggled in vain against this demand which was supported by the emperor. "If the Good Shepherd would lay down His life for the sheep, much more ought the Pope to lay down his dignities." The Pope yielded or seemed to yield, and the reunion of Christendom seemed to be an accomplished fact. But John XXIII. was revolving schemes for escaping out of the trap. While a great tournament engrossed general attention, he fled in mean disguise from the city. But the council, under Sigismund's guidance, was resolute against him. It declared that it was "lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost," and that the Pope was bound to obey it. The Pope found himself without sufficient support, and was brought back, a prisoner, to Constance. The council drew up a long list of charges against him, which embraced every sort of offence, with the exception of heresy. "From the days of his youth he was

The task  
of the  
Council of  
Constance.

Flight  
of John  
XXIII

The  
of the  
schism.

steeped in vice, he was a vessel of every kind of sin." He was declared deposed, and all subjects were freed from allegiance to him. Catholic unity was now really within sight. One rival Pope abdicated, another was deposed. A new election then took place, and Pope Martin V. was chosen to rule over the united Catholic Church (1417).

Before this had taken place the council had taken questionable measures for the repression of heresy. The confusion **Wyclif** in the Church had favoured the rise and expression of views hostile to the policy and doctrines of the rulers of the Church. Wyclif in England had found eager support when he urged the national rights of England against the extortions and oppressions of the Roman Court, and he had carried many with him when he criticized the morals of the clergy, and declared that sacraments celebrated by an immoral priesthood lost all validity, and appealed from the accepted doctrines of the Church to the authority of the Bible. The movement had produced a great influence in England, and had been treated on the whole with moderation and humanity. The ideas of Wyclif produced an even more dangerous ferment when they were transplanted to the distant soil of Bohemia. The Bohemians were a Slavonic people (Czechs they called, and still call themselves); but they were included within the limits of the empire. Their king was the childless and drunken Wenzel; but the Emperor Sigismund was Wenzel's heir, and he took, therefore, a direct and strong interest in Bohemian affairs. Bohemia was a flourishing and important state. The great university at Prague was one of the three or four most influential universities in Europe. But there were dangerous elements of fermentation in the country. The Bohemian population regarded the considerable number of German residents with intense dislike, and there had been for some time widespread opposition to the Catholic Church in Bohemia, which seemed foreign in its origin and sympathies. Then came the teaching of Wyclif. It found ready acceptance in the university of Prague, and its chief exponent was the eloquent Huss, who held a high place at the university. He eagerly preached that "Bohemia existed for the Bohemians";

that the vices of the clergy were the ruin of the Church ; that the individual conscience was in religious matters the court of appeal ; that the doctrine of transubstantiation was false, and that the Bible alone was certainly true. His preaching found wide acceptance. He was denounced in Rome and excommunicated ; but his hold on the public mind was not shaken.

The council of Constance was all the more anxious to prove its orthodoxy, because it was engaged in deposing popes ; and Sigismund, was ambitious to restore the religious order to Bohemia as well as unity to the Church. He invited Huss to Constance, and gave him a safe conduct, declaring that he should be free "to come and stay and go at his pleasure." Huss accepted the challenge, and was eager to argue his case ; but he found the council in no mood for argument. He was thrown into a foul prison and he nearly died there. When he came before the council his opinions were condemned. Sigismund was induced to allow his safe conduct to be violated, on the ground that promises made to heretics were not binding. Huss was burnt outside the walls of Constance (1415).

Little was done, or seriously attempted, towards the reformation of the abuses of the Church. The subject was a thorny one ; all concerned were eager to leave Constance where they had been detained so long. The council broke up with a promise that another council should shortly be held, and that this should deal with the abuses of the Church.

The next important council did not come so soon as had been promised ; for the popes disliked the principle of councils, which were a limitation on the powers of the papal monarchy ; and perhaps the council of Basel would never have met at all had it not been for the critical condition of Bohemia. There the burning of Huss had had no pacifying effect ; on the contrary, the flames from his pyre seemed to have set the whole country alight. The Hussites found very capable leaders, first the noble Ziska, and then the priest Prokop. The Bohemian war is one of the strangest chapters in military history. The rebels made great use of artillery, and their

armies moved with a rapidity that baffled the lumbering Imperial armies that were brought against them. Bohemia was entirely in the possession of the rebel heretics, and they carried their victorious arms far into Germany.

The corruptions of the Church were one of the great causes of the Bohemian revolt. So in 1431 the new council was called at Basel to consider the reform of abuses. Its sessions were not ended until 1449. It was all through a more headstrong and revolutionary body than the council of Constance; but it produced little effect. For a time it created another schism in the Church; and when at last it ended it passed away unregretted. The Bohemian question was first dealt with. Representatives of the Hussites were received and great concessions made. But the Bohemian war came to an end through the violent divisions among the rebels themselves. They broke up into moderates and extremists. In 1434 the extremists, led by Prokop, were defeated with huge loss in the battle of Lipan, and the way was opened for a settlement on terms agreeable to the court of Rome. Sigismund, after much negotiation and many promises which he had no intention of keeping, made himself master of Bohemia. He died in 1437. None have ever called him a great emperor. There was always something flashy and fantastic in his actions. But he held a great position and pursued often high and worthy aims. He is connected with some of the greatest events of the fifteenth century, and his career provides us with a key to much of the history of Germany for a century after his death.

The relation of the council with the emperor had been varying, and never entirely friendly; but the relations of the council with the Pope were always hostile. The council of Basel, far more than the council of Constance, existed to limit, and almost to destroy the supreme authority of the papacy and to set up a kind of parliamentary government of the Church in its stead. The council of Constance had declared that councils were the supreme power in the Church, and the council of Basel reaffirmed this with still greater emphasis. "A general council has its power immediately from Christ, and all of every rank,

even the papal, are bound to obey it in matters pertaining to the faith, the extirpation of heresy and the reformation of the Church in head and members." The attempt was made at Basel to erect this into a central doctrine of the Church, and to force all popes to swear to it before entering on their office. Against a council inspired by such a spirit the Pope was bound to fight. Pope Eugenius IV. twice attempted to dissolve the council at Basel and to call it for a later date to some Italian town, where it could be flooded by Italian clergy in the papal interest. But it was at first too strongly supported by the secular powers, and the attempt failed. At last the relations between Pope and council grew so strained that the council determined to depose the Pope, chiefly on the ground that he refused to accept the supremacy of councils, and they chose a new Pope, Felix V. They aimed now at vast ecclesiastical changes.

The high  
claims  
of the  
council.

They would destroy the financial abuses of the papal court; they would grant indulgences in their corporate capacity; they would by negotiation bring to an end the schism of the Eastern Church. But they were attempting tasks far beyond their power. The secular powers of Europe, in whose support lay most of their strength, had no confidence in them. They had contributed to the solution of the Bohemian question, but the Emperor and Pope concluded the pacification there without reference to them. The prospect of a new schism was regarded everywhere with alarm. No one believed in the council's power to effect the reforms of which they spoke so often. Germany and France both negotiated with the papacy for an alleviation of abuses without considering the council. So the council of Basel found its foundations undermined and gradually collapsed. The attendance dwindled there. Felix V. resigned. At last in 1449 the council was dissolved, and no one raised a hand in defence of a body, which had talked loudly and done little.

Dissolu-  
tion of the  
council.

The *prestige* of the papacy rose as that of the council fell. Pope Eugenius IV. had brought the negotiation with the Greeks to a conclusion which was a great nominal victory for the Latin Church. Disregarding the efforts of the council of Basel he had himself called a council at Florence, which

was subsequently moved to Ferrara. A large number of Greek prelates came, ready at last to make the concessions that the Latins demanded. It was not that they were convinced by argument or attracted by the charms of unity. But at Constantinople the end of the Christian Empire was clearly approaching. The fourth crusade had ruined the strength of the empire, and the restoration of a Greek line of emperors did not bring sufficient force to resist the constantly advancing inroad of the Turks. Help could only come from the Christian powers of the West, and the only chance of securing such help lay in the acceptance of the religious doctrines of the West. So the patriarch of Constantinople and many prelates came to Florence and Ferrara to debate on the use of unleavened or leavened bread in the Eucharist ; on the question as to whether the Holy Ghost should be defined as "proceeding from the Father," or "from the Father and the Son ;" above all, on the crucial question of the supremacy of the bishop of Rome over the universal Church. The Greeks argued subtly and keenly, but the majority were, in the end, ready to drain the bitter draught. In July, 1439, the union of the Eastern and Western Churches was declared. It was a great triumph for the Pope, though experience was to prove it an empty one. The Greeks generally refused the decision of their prelates. "Better the turban of the Turks," they declared, "than the Pope's tiara ;" and it was not until December, 1452, that at last, with the Turk at their gate, the festival of union was celebrated ; it antedated by only a few months the world-shaking victory of the crescent over the cross at Constantinople (1453).

With the dissolution of the council of Basel, the conciliar movement was at an end. The effort to depose the papal monarchy, and to substitute an ecclesiastical parliament failed altogether, (as parallel political movements in England and France failed ; for in France the States-General failed to establish themselves firmly, and the absolute monarchy of Charles VII. and Louis XI. brings the century towards its end ; whilst in

The increased strength of the papacy.

England the premature parliamentary experiments of the Lancastrians lead up to the strong monarchy of the Yorkists and the Tudors. So in the government of the Church the authority of the papacy found itself, at least in appearance, strengthened by the failure of the councils to reform and reorganize the Church. Nicholas V., who succeeded Eugenius, gained glory for the Roman Court by associating Pope it with the Renaissance in Art and Letters which Nicholas V. was the great preoccupation of the Italian mind. After him came Pius II., who, before his pontificate, was known as the scholar Æneas Silvius, and in that capacity had written and spoken in favour of councils. But in 1460 he issued the Bull "*Execrabilis*" in which any appeal to a council was denounced "as an execrable abuse unheard of in primitive times," and any one so appealing was declared *ipso facto* excommunicated. Further appeals were made in spite of this. But the Bull became one of the pillars of papal authority.

The papacy, then, had to all appearances weathered the storm; and Pius II. might think that he occupied the same position, and wielded the same power as Gregory VII. and Innocent III. That was far from being the case. The criticism of the doctrines and government of the Church which Wyclif and Huss had begun did not die out, and could not be crushed out; the revival of learning contributed to it new weapons. Erasmus was born in 1467; Luther in 1483. The spontaneous orthodoxy of the Middle Ages had passed away for ever. The schism and the councils, too, had awakened a dangerous feeling of national life in religious matters. England, France, Germany, even Spain, had dealt with their religious problem as nations, not as sections of the universal Catholic Church; and this national feeling was a spirit that the papacy would have to reckon with. Meanwhile, the papacy became more and more Italian. Its claims to govern Europe, in religious and political matters, were maintained, but they were silently neglected. But in Italy the Pope had a large power, and could play an important if not a domineering part. Until the storm of the Reformation broke the chief interest of the

The Bull  
"Execrabilis."

Condition  
of the  
papacy  
at the end  
of the  
fifteenth  
century.



popes was to be found in the development of the resources of the papal states, and the winning for those states of a wider influence among the rival powers of Italy. In such a policy lay for a time their security; but half a century after the death of Pius II. their overthrow came from the same source.

In addition to the ordinary histories, Creighton's *History of the Papacy during the Reformation* is the great authority. Hallam's *Europe in the Middle Ages*. Lane-Poole, *Illustrations of Mediæval Thought*.

## CHAPTER XX

### Germany and Italy in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

#### GERMANY

THE history of Germany during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is particularly difficult for English readers to understand. It is, in all superficial respects, a great contrast between the history of England during the same period, and almost as widely separated in character from the history of France. National unity had been secured in England by monarchy and Parliament, and since the Norman conquest it had almost continuously advanced and strengthened. The anarchy of the reign of John and the private warfare at the beginning of the Wars of the Roses did not seriously threaten it. It was the nation united under its king which had annexed Wales and Ireland. We have seen what the process was in France. The crown there had extended its domain since the eleventh century, until nearly all France was enclosed within it, and the great nobles no longer ventured to claim an independent standing. The same tendency to concentration under the monarchy is observable in Spain, and is one of the general political characteristics of the period.

But in Germany the tendency was all in the opposite direction;

towards disruption, not towards unity; towards the emphasis of feudal claims, not towards their extinction. The German monarchy had suffered disastrous collapse when the Imperial claims of the Hohenstaufen were defeated in 1268. For a time there was no emperor, and when the interregnum was over the empire returned in name rather than in reality; no wise ruler ever tried again to make of it the universal European monarchy, of which Frederick Barbarossa had dreamed.

Nor was the empire more effective, regarded as the German monarchy. During the struggle with the papacy, the great nobles of Germany had risen into power and prominence, and it was with them that the future of Germany lay. The strength of the empire henceforth depended on the power of the noble house with which it was associated. Thus in Germany the fortunes of the great noble houses became a matter of first-rate importance. In England it is a matter of subordinate interest to trace the fortunes of the great houses of Norfolk, Warwick, Northumberland, Westmoreland, etc. But in Germany the political history of the state depended on the marriages, inheritances, quarrels, wills, annexations of a dozen great families, such as the Wittelsbachs, Wettins, Welfs, and above all of the Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns. As they added house to house, province to province, and even kingdom to kingdom, the fortunes of modern Europe were being shaped.

It was not only the struggle of the empire with the papacy which led to the ruin of the effectiveness of the empire. It was prevented from growth by the fact that it was elective. For elective monarchy, though it has procured the support of some theorists, has in practice usually worked badly. In Germany, the electors—the few great powers, ecclesiastical and secular, who had by tradition the right of making the choice—exactcd from the candidates promises whereby the power of the crown were given away in order to secure the empty title of empire. These promises were known in Germany as capitulations. Moreover, the electors were usually careful to choose as emperor some noble who was not too powerful. They feared that a strong man would use his strength to beat down the powers

Importance of the history of the great houses of Germany.

Influence of election on the empire

and claims of the feudal aristocracy. They were anxious, too, to prevent the empire from becoming hereditary either in theory or fact; for the hereditary principle was a great source of strength to those governments which had adopted it.

Yet if we look more closely we shall find that even in Germany the tendency to monarchical concentration is observable. The empire availed nothing against the great nobles, but those great nobles asserted their claims successfully against the smaller nobles. The territories of the Wittelsbachs, Hapsburgs, and Hohenzollerns were real monarchies, though Germany was not.

Spread of  
monarchy  
in the  
German  
states.

The history of Germany, therefore, is not to be found in the history of the empire; but we will first glance at the chief figures in the list of emperors and then turn to the greater things that were happening away from the nominal government of Germany.

In 1273, after an interval of nineteen years, during which there was no emperor, Rudolf of Hapsburg was chosen as Rudolf of emperor. His house at the time of his election Hapsburg. enjoyed no pre-eminence in Germany. The castle of Hapsburg (the word means ravens-castle) is situated in Swabia, and the fortune of the house seemed likely to develop there. But the great fact of Rudolf's reign—a fact important, not so much for Germany as for the house and dynasty which traces its greatness to him—was that he gained for it great possessions on the eastern frontiers of Germany.

Along the east of Germany ran a semi-circle of non-German states, all of them, with one notable exception, of Slavonic origin. There were the Prussians and Lithuanians to the north; then came Poland, then Bohemia, then Hungary. The Hungarians or Magyars—to give them the name by which they called themselves—were of Asiatic (Turanian) origin, and were the third swarm of kindred race which had forced itself into Europe up the Danube valley. Bohemia and Hungary were the two states with whom Germany had the most important relations. Hungary was admittedly outside the empire. Bohemia was regarded as lying within it (though its population

The non-  
German  
neigh-  
bours of  
Germany.

was quite alien in race and language from the Germans), and its king had sometimes acted as one of the electors when the Imperial throne was vacant. In Bohemia there now ruled the powerful King Ottokar. He had laid hands on the German lands adjacent to Bohemia—on Austria, Styria, and Carinthia; and had refused to do homage to Rudolf. Hence war came. Ottokar was defeated and killed in 1278 at the battle of Marchfeld. His German possessions passed into the hands of Rudolf, and a marriage alliance established the influence of the House of Hapsburg in Bohemia and prepared the way for their future annexation of that kingdom. The politics of Europe still show the influence of the battle of Marchfeld; it laid the foundation of the power of the present Austrian Empire.

The Imperial crown was destined to become an almost hereditary possession of the House of Hapsburg; but two centuries would pass before that. The success of Rudolf's reign made the electors look away from his house for the next emperor. But we may pass over the emperors who followed. They are interesting and they are important, but rather for the history of Italy than for that of Germany. But it was a great event from many points of view when, in 1347, Charles of Luxemburg, King of Bohemia, was chosen emperor. He was not the first member of the Luxemburg house to win the title; but he was the most important for German history. He left a permanent mark both upon Germany and upon Bohemia. By a document which is known as "the Golden Bull" published in 1356, he gave to the empire, not exactly a definite constitution, but at least a set of definite regulations on many important points in the political life of Germany. It was very far from giving unity to Germany. It made no attempt to bring all the population under one law and one government. On the contrary, it recognized the practical independence of the great princes, and for this reason it has been said that Charles IV. "legalized anarchy and called it a constitution." It declared that the choice of the emperor at every vacancy should rest with seven electors, and these were the Archbishops of (1) Mainz, (2) Treves (or Trier),

and (3) Cologne, and (4) the Margrave of Brandenburg, (5) the Count Palatine of the Rhine, (6) the Duke of Saxony, and (7) the King of Bohemia. The permanence and independence of these last four states were guaranteed; their territories were to descend undiminished to the eldest heir, and were not to be partitioned, according to the old German fashion, among all the sons. These are the most important features of the Bull; but these important stipulations are embedded in a mass of pompous and trifling regulations as to etiquette and ceremony.

Charles IV. failed thus to give unity to the empire; but he achieved a greater success in his kingdom of Bohemia.

The house of Luxemburg prepares the way for the Hapsburgs. The country was in a thoroughly flourishing state. There were a large number of German immigrants, but the majority were of the original race—the Czechs. The university of Prague became one of the most important universities in Europe; the strong national feeling and high education of

the country prepared the way for the Hussite movement in religion which has already been noted. Charles IV. ruled over a wide extent of territory. In addition to the original territories of his house in Belgium he ruled in the East over Bohemia, Silesia, Brandenburg, and Moravia. Marriage connections prepared the way for a still greater destiny. We must not follow all of these here; but he connected himself with Hungary and with the House of Hapsburg. Hungary, Bohemia, and the possessions of the house of Hapsburg ultimately came together in the hands of his descendants. It was said of Austria, later, that her marriages were more successful than her wars; and Charles IV. in this way, and in many others, was unwittingly one of the chief authors of the greatness of the Hapsburgs.

Charles IV.'s work was partly undone by his drunken son Wenzel; but the fortunes of the house were restored by Sigismund, of whom we have seen much in connection with the councils of Constance and of Basel. He left no son to succeed him, but his daughter and heiress, Elizabeth, married Albert of Austria, who reigned as the Emperor Albert II. So the house of Hapsburg again

enjoyed the Imperial title; and from this time onwards the empire was almost hereditary in this house. Only one emperor was ever chosen from any other stock until the time when the empire faded out of Europe before the victories of Napoleon at the beginning of the nineteenth century. But though the empire thus became hereditary in all but name, heredity did not avail to give it strength. Too much ground had already been lost. We shall see how the Austrian house struggled again and again (especially during the Reformation and in the Thirty Years' War) to make the empire the dominant power in Germany. But the effort came too late. It was destined to remain the highest title, the most coveted decoration in Europe, and little more.

If the history of the empire is not the true history of Germany where are we to look for it? In the life of the individual states; in the progress of the great towns; in the development of commerce; in the growth of the universities; in the condition of the people. We must touch on one or two of these topics.

The empire was powerless to defend the minor states of Germany. Spontaneously, therefore, they drew together to protect themselves. The fourteenth century was a period of leagues in Germany and the chief of these was the Hanseatic League.

The Hanseatic League was a spontaneous movement of the chief towns of the North German coast and the Rhine, to secure for themselves the protection which the empire in that time of anarchy was not able to afford them. For there was no thought of freedom of trade in those days. The seas were unsafe, the harbours of foreign countries were hostile, no single city was strong enough to protect its commerce against its rivals. So the great towns of North Germany—Lübeck, Hamburg, Rostock, Stralsund, Thorn, and seventy others—joined together for mutual assistance in commerce and fishing. Their league was never a close-knit one, it never approached a true federal government. But it stimulated trade and increased the prosperity of North Germany, and modern Germany looks

back to it as proof that Germany can play a great part upon the seas. It was opposed by the Scandinavian kingdoms of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, which were joined together in one state by the union of Kalmar in 1397; and against them the league fought fiercely with varying fortune. But

**Decline of the Hanseatic League.** the league suffered, too, through its own indefinite constitution, and the quarrels of its members. Lastly, the herring shoal, which provided the

Hanseatic fishing fleet with its chief occupation, left the Baltic in the fifteenth century. So the league, without definitely coming to an end, dwindled into insignificance in the fifteenth century. Its fate would have been a very different one if there had been a strong German empire to support it.

At the same time in the south of Germany, another movement bore witness to the weakness of the empire, and created

**The Helvetic Confederation.** a league more permanent than the Hanseatic, which has bequeathed to modern Europe the Swiss Republic. The country, which is now the

north-west of Switzerland, consisted then of cities and country districts owing allegiance to many different lords. But throughout the whole, there breathed a spirit of independence. Feudalism had not struck its roots deep there. The towns enjoyed practical independence, and the country districts were organized into free communities, managing their own affairs and setting feudal justice at defiance. The walls of the cities and the barrier of the mountains had made the land the chosen home of liberty. Here, as in the north, leagues for mutual protection and help had sprung into existence, and in 1291 the three Forest Cantons, Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden, formed themselves into a perpetual league. Their action threatened the Austrian Hapsburgs in whose territories the Cantons lay. In 1315, Leopold of Austria led against the independent mountaineers an army chiefly consisting of mounted knights. For a century and more after this date feudal chivalry played a sorry part when brought face to face with troops of a different kind. We have seen the feudal array broken at Crecy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, at Courtrai, and in Bohemia during the Hussite wars. But nowhere was the failure of the armed and mail-clad knight

more conspicuous than in the battles which laid the foundations of Swiss freedom. In 1315, at Morgarten, the forces of Leopold were utterly beaten by the Swiss peasants. Victory swelled the numbers of the league. The great towns of the neighbourhood came in—Zurich, and Zug, and Bern. When in 1386 another Leopold of Austria led an army against the confederates he was utterly beaten at Sempach. The confederation was then founded in a more definite form, and it lies at the basis of the present Swiss Republic. But we must note that the Swiss Confederation, though it had defeated the Hapsburgs, had not broken away from the empire. Its connection was very slight; but it was technically within the borders of the empire until 1648.

If we cross from the south-west to the north-east of Germany we find there also important events taking place, which contribute to an even more important modern state than Switzerland, namely Prussia. We have seen how on the Vistula were settled the heathen Slavonic races—the Lithuanians and Prussians. These lay beyond the limits of the empire, and the mark of Brandenburg had been established to watch them. In the thirteenth century a new agency had been employed for their conversion or destruction; the words were nearly synonymous at the end of the crusading movement. The “Knights of the Teutonic Order” had been founded at the time of Frederick Barbarossa’s crusade. The failure of the crusading movement left them with no obvious task to perform; and for some time they had their head-quarters in Venice. But in 1228 they were transferred to the Prussian frontier of Germany, for the conquest and conversion of the heathen there. Wide lands were allotted to them. They founded towns, churches, monasteries. Their courage and military skill were unquestioned, and the young nobles of all Europe came to hunt and to kill in what was regarded as a holy war. Christianity, German ideas of life and government, agriculture, and commerce were spread by their action far beyond the limits of Germany. But towards the end of the fourteenth century troubles gathered round them. They, like the Hanseatic

Battles of  
Morgarten  
and  
Sempach.

The rise of  
Brandenburg-  
Prussia.

Knights  
of the  
Teutonic  
Order.



league, were threatened by the consolidation of the Scandinavian kingdoms ; worse still, in 1386 the Lithuanian Duke Jagello became Christian and was raised to the throne of the neighbouring kingdom of Poland. With this event the balance of military strength altogether changed, and in 1410 a Prussian-Polish army overwhelmed the army of the Teutonic Knights at the battle of Tannenberg. Their power passed away at once ; the lands west of the Vistula were incorporated with Poland ; the knights still ruled over those to the east of the Vistula on condition of doing homage to Poland. The influence of Germany east of the Oder was seriously threatened.

All the constructive activities of Germany that we have noted took place without the assistance of the empire. And there are many other instances which we might give to show that Germany was falling to pieces. There was a Swabian league in the south-west, and in the north and west many rich districts were being drawn together by the Duke of Burgundy, and in effect withdrawn from their allegiance to the empire. (More of this action in the next chapter. We have said enough to justify the words of Pope Pius II. to the German people : " Ye might be masters of the world as heretofore, were it not for your division of sovereignty, to which wise men have for long traced all your disasters."

## ITALY

Italy at this time resembled Germany in its many divisions and in the vigorous life of its towns ; but in other respects it was widely separated in character and development. Its history is full of noise, violence, and confusion. The personalities which emerge, and many of the incidents are full of dramatic interest. The history of Italy as a whole during this time is " full of sound and fury," and it signifies the failure of Italy to make herself an important force in European politics. The following general features of the time may be noted.

It was for Italy, even more than for Germany, a time of

disunion and "lack of governance." There was not even the theory of the empire to hold it together. Italy, from 1300 to 1500, offers a close analogy to Greece in the fourth century before Christ. There was the same eager city life, the same fierce rivalry of city against city, and of party against party in the same city, the same incapacity to form stable leagues or permanent alliances; there was the same menace of "barbarian" conquest from the north, which was fulfilled in the French invasions of the end of the fifteenth century; finally, there was the same glorious devotion to art and thought, to truth and beauty.

A further significant parallel may be noted in the employment of mercenary troops, and the importance of mercenary leaders (*condottieri*). In the thirteenth century the Italian towns had fought their battles with *dottieri*. their own citizens, and it was on their resistance that the Italian plans of Frederick Barbarossa and Frederick II. had suffered shipwreck. But now the citizens—partly through love of ease and interest in commerce, and partly because the methods of war required careful and prolonged training—entrusted their defence to companies of professional soldiers, raised and commanded by leaders from whom they were hired by the states as occasion arose. These soldiers and their leaders were of every nationality (Sir John Hawkwood, the Englishman, was one of the earliest); but in the fifteenth century the most notable were Italians. They fought well and often with remarkable fidelity, but the hazard of entrusting the defence into the hands of men who had no personal interest in the state is obvious.

Of the morality of Italy during this age it is difficult to speak in general terms. We note at the beginning the names of Dante and St. Catherine of Siena, and there are no nobler or purer names in the history of religion. But after them the influence of religion on conduct seems very small, and we can discern no standard of morals which was even in theory regarded as obligatory. Ambition and a desire for notoriety urged men on to achieve their ends by every method of violence, cruelty, or deceit.

The picture so far seems a grim and terrible one; but that is not the general impression we derive from a study of Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, for there is another side to it, which will be more fully treated in another chapter—the side of literature and art. Here it is enough to say that during this time of storm and stress, Italy was producing masterpieces of literature, painting, and sculpture which mark a new era in the life of man. The epoch of violence—the epoch of Sforza and Rienzi and the vile royal family of Naples—shines with a light borrowed from their contemporaries Dante and Petrarch, Giotto and Perugino, Raphael, and Michael Angelo.

It can hardly be said that there is any history of Italy during this time; but only of the different Italian states. The chapter must end with a few words on the most important.

The kingdom of Naples stood quite apart from the rest of Italy. Here only was there a monarchy resting on feudal institutions, like the monarchies to the north of the Alps. We have seen how at the end of the thirteenth century it fell into the hands of the French house of Anjou, and how at Easter time, in the year 1282, the population of Sicily rose and destroyed the French garrison in a massacre which is known as “the Sicilian Vespers.” The crown was offered to the royal house of Aragon and accepted, and the fierce rivalry of the French and Spanish houses, thus inaugurated, lasted during the next two centuries. But no purpose would be served by following even the main features of the intrigues and the crimes of the royal house of Naples. It intermarried with the royal family of Hungary, and thus the affairs of these two wholly different states became intertwined in a perplexing manner. Another marriage with the royal family of Aragon resulted eventually in the reunion of Naples and Sicily under Alfonso, King of Naples and Sicily from 1435–1458. The land enjoyed peace and some measure of prosperity towards the end of the century, but fell far behind the rest of Italy in civilization and culture.

The states of the Church gained during the reign of the Emperor Rudolf a recognition of their entire independence

from the empire. But they were tossed again and again on the waves of revolution. The residence of the popes at Avignon allowed an almost independent municipal government to arise in Rome. Men's eyes were turning again to the history of Ancient Rome, and they contrasted the present condition of the city with what she had been in the days of the Scipios and the Cæsars.

The states  
of the  
Church.

These ideas found their highest expression in the career of Rienzi. He was a man of the people, and the bitter opponent of the aristocracy. He had hoped at first to give Rome peace and unity and power by inducing the Popes to return. Failing in this purpose he turned to the people of Rome and by his eloquence and energy induced them to rise against their aristocratic rulers. The revolution succeeded with marvellous ease (1347), and it seemed for a time as if something of the greatness of Rome in her old days had returned. But Rienzi had not the practical knowledge and self-restraint, nor had the people the public spirit which would have been necessary to make the movement a success. What eloquence and enthusiasm and a theatrical instinct could do he did. But the Roman populace chafed when they found that taxes would be wanted under the new government as under the old. He was murdered in a great popular rising in 1354. Twenty years later the Popes returned to Rome, and the history of the city was again closely linked to the history of the papacy. Five and a half centuries would pass before she won a popular self-government for herself, and it came then in a very different shape from the Imperial dreams of Rienzi.

Rienzi in  
Rome.

The history of Florence is better known than that of any other Italian state, and it is so full of change and incident that it is particularly difficult to summarize. But in brief it presents us with the spectacle, well known in Greek history, of a state tossed between oligarchy and democracy, where democracy triumphs only to lead to the establishment of that type of personal government which the Greeks called a tyranny. The parties formed and broke with great rapidity, and the principles separating them are often difficult to make out. The city had belonged to the

Florence.

territories of the Countess Matilda of Tuscany, and after her death and the division of her territories had won its independence. There were various claimants for power. Outside of the city there were the nobles, largely of Germanic stock, in their mountain strongholds. Within the walls there was the bishop and the different grades of inhabitants who may be divided into (1) the seven rich and strong trades guilds; (2) the numerous smaller guilds; (3) those who belonged to no guild and were excluded from all political power, for power in Florence lay with the guilds. In 1282 the popular element triumphed and for nearly a century power lay in the hands of the delegates of the great guilds. This is often called a democracy, but no more deserves the name in its modern sense than the democracy of Athens; the mass of the people were excluded from power and chafed at the exclusion. There was an attempted revolution in 1382, but it failed, the rich and exclusive guilds being established in power more securely than ever.

The narrow government thus established was vigorous and successful; but it was ruined by the spirit of faction which was the bane of the political life of Florence. Two families, the Albizzi and the Medici, were eager rivals; and the Medici in the contest appealed for the support of the people. The Albizzi triumphed at first and banished the Medici. But they were recalled (1434), and their great leader, Cosimo de' Medici, established his power, and his family ruled in Florence for nearly 200 years. His rule was of the kind that Augustus once established in Rome; it was founded on the manipulation of the existing constitution not on its overthrow; he insinuated himself into power rather than seized it. He gave Florence peace, order, and security, and he made her glorious by his patronage of arts and letters. He and his successors (among whom the chief was Lorenzo the magnificent) ruled all the more firmly because their position was intangible and indefinite.

In Milan we see at the same time the triumph of naked military force. Two families, the Visconti and the Sforzas, ruled in succession, and ruled by the same weapons of perfidy

and cruelty. The first of the Visconti was appointed by the Emperor Henry VII. to represent him in Milan in 1312. His descendants maintained themselves by force and fraud. The mass of the citizens lived their lives **Milan.** undisturbed ; but the political opponents of the ruling family were in constant dread of torture and death. When the family of the Visconti was without male heirs the heiress Bianca married a mercenary soldier of brutal energy, Sforza by name, whose father had been a peasant. Under the new dynasty Milan was governed as before. The history of Milan under these two families is an almost incredible record of crime and cruelty.

Thus at the end of the fifteenth century we have in Naples a feudal monarchy ; in Rome a theocracy ; in Florence a popular dictatorship ; in Milan a military tyranny. When we turn to Venice the series of typical constitutions is concluded by the most perfect example in history of a close oligarchy.

We have seen already something of the early history of Venice and of her unparalleled geographical position. Her social condition was also exceptional. She had **Venice.** for a long time no territory on the mainland, and so feudalism did not exist for her. Her citizens were all engaged in trade : her great men were successful and wealthy traders. The Crusaders had opened up new avenues of trade to her and had increased her wealth. We have seen how large a part she had played in the conquest of Constantinople in the fourth crusade (1204). She held from that time on a position of pre-eminence among all the other trading states of the East. But as she grew more wealthy her **The** constitution changed and hardened, the people **ruling** were gradually thrust out from all participation **class in** in the government ; the prominent rich families **Venice.** of Venice monopolized power. They owed their power largely to their energy, ability, and public spirit ; and almost to the end of her existence as a free republic the policy of Venice is one of the great examples of successful and subtle statecraft both in internal and external affairs. The charges of cruelty and dark intrigue that are sometimes brought against her government are undeserved. They are more conspicuous in

other Italian states; what distinguishes Venice is the order and stability of her government, and the prosperity of her people. The rulers of Venice declared that their aim was "so to rule that they might possess the hearts and love of the citizens and subjects," and there was some justification for their claim.

We may notice three steps as marking the hardening of her constitution into an oligarchy, which aimed on the one side at the reduction of the Doge to a mere figure head, and on the other, the exclusion of the people from power. First in 1172 the Great Council was created, consisting of the nobles of Venice, and acting as the electoral body of Venice to the exclusion of the people. Then in 1297 began the greatest change of all, what is known as the closing of the "The closing of the Great Council." Great Council. The list of the families whose members had a right to seats in the Great Council was drawn up, and it was declared that no new names should be added to it. Venice was now a close oligarchy; outside of a certain list, which contained in the end 1212 names, no one could vote in the election of the Doge or hold office. The new constitution was readily accepted by the people, though some ambitious nobles resented the destruction of the personal power of the Doge. Lastly, in 1310, after a conspiracy had been defeated, which aimed at the restoration of the rights of the people, the famous Council of Ten was appointed. Its special mission was to strike swiftly and secretly at the enemies of the state, and it may be compared to the Ephors at Sparta or the Committee of Public Safety during the French Revolution. This council, annually appointed, watched specially against the encroachments of the Doge, and soon became the real government of Venice.

The fourteenth century too saw the growth of Venetian possessions in the mainland of Italy. The rivalry of Genoa was beaten down in the great battle of Chioggia (1380). A little later, Padua was conquered, and Padua, Vicenza, and Verona came into the possession of Venice. She thus came into contact and conflict with Milan. But more dangerous than Milan was the progress of the Turkish power. When

Venetian  
possession  
in the main-  
land.

in 1453 Constantinople fell into the hands of the Turks, that great event sounded the death knell of Venetian power in the Eastern Mediterranean; but we shall recur to this in the next chapter.

For Germany: Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire* and Henderson's *History of Germany*; Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*; Maurice's *Bohemia*; Zimmern's *Hansa Towns*. For Italy: Sismondi's *Italian Republics*; Horatio Brown, *Venice; an Historical Sketch*; Villari's *History of Florence*; Machiavelli's *Florentine History*.

## CHAPTER XXI

### The Outer Circle of European Culture

WE have, in the past chapter, been chiefly concerned with the affairs of Italy, France, and Germany. In this chapter an attempt will be made to bring out the most important features in the history of the countries lying outside of these central states, in all of which events were happening destined to have a great influence on the future of Europe. The history of our own islands will be recounted in the next chapter.

#### 1. SPAIN

We have already seen something of the history of Spain. We have seen how deeply the culture and language of Rome had penetrated there; how the Visigothic kingdom had been established there, and how Justinian's efforts to reannex Spain to the Imperial dominions had been attended with only a transitory success. The Moorish conquest of Spain.

Then in 711 came the event which has coloured every part of Spanish history from that time to this. The Mahomedan army under Tarik passed from Morocco into Spain and defeated Roderic, the last king of the Visigoths, in a long battle on the banks of the Guadalete.) After that the tide of Mahomedan



success flowed quickly over the peninsula. There was little unity or cohesion in the Visigothic Kingdom; the native population had not blended with the Visigoths and the Visigothic nobles were at feud among themselves. So the wave of Islam flowed up to the Pyrenees.

Nor did it seem likely to find its limit there. It invaded the South of France and occupied many cities and much fair country. But in the battle of Tours (732) Charles Martel inflicted on it a serious defeat, and his grandson, the great Charles, carried the arms of the Franks south of the Pyrenees, and began the work of the reconquest of Spain for Christendom and European culture. For six centuries after that the struggle against the Mahomedan power in Spain forms the central thread of Spanish history. The free Christian states were never completely wiped out. The Pyrenean chain of mountains always sheltered tribes or bands who refused to accept the foreign yoke. There was formed first the Asturias, then Leon, then Navarre, then Aragon. Later the Mahomedans were pushed out of the centre of Spain and the kingdom of Castile was formed. Aragon spread down to the rich territories on either side of the river Ebro. Lastly, in the fifteenth century, the union of Castile and Aragon brought about the destruction of what remained of the Moorish kingdom and the political union of the whole peninsula with the exception of Portugal.

Thus the history of Spain down to the close of the Middle Ages is one long crusade. (Yet the mutual hatred of the two races and faiths may easily be exaggerated. The Christian powers were usually at bitter feud with one another when they were not fighting against the Moors.) The civilization of the Moors in Cordova, Granada, and elsewhere) was for some time tolerant, cultured, and artistic; the population under their rule was prosperous, and the Christian powers did not by any means disdain to intermarry with them, to make alliance with them, and even to appeal to their help against Christian rivals. (There is no greater tragedy in European history than the extinction of this civilization, which contributed so much to European culture, and might have contributed so much more.)

The decline of Mahomedanism in Spain.

Relations of Christians and Moors.

The Moorish dominion was never firmly rooted in the peninsula. Its strength soon began to decline, and it would have disappeared much sooner if it had not been supported by fresh swarms of Mahomedans from North Africa. At the end of the eleventh century, when the Seljukian Turks were alarming Europe by their advance in the East, there was an almost equally threatening movement in Spain. The Almoravides, a religious body inspired by intense zeal for Islam, invaded the land, drove back the forces of the Christians and defeated the armies of Castile and Navarre in the great battle of Zallaca near Badajoz (1086). The tide of battle flowed again strongly in favour of the Moors.

But the ebb soon came. The Moorish population was not really large, and its military efficiency soon decayed. The Christian armies soon resumed their superiority. This is the period of the exploits, real and imaginary, of the Cid, who fought against Christians as well as against Moors, and was sometimes even in alliance with the infidel; but who was on the whole an important agent in the advance of the Christian arms. Military orders, closely resembling the Templars and the Knights of St. John, were founded during the struggle, and contributed to the victory. The decisive victory came in 1212, when the Moors were defeated by Alfonso VIII. of Castile in the great battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. The Moors were driven back into the south-east of the peninsula, and their power would have soon been destroyed if it had not been for the wars and feuds of the Christian powers.

We may pass over two centuries and a half, full of conflict and heroism and of interesting constitutional development. By the middle of the fifteenth century the three great powers in the peninsula were Portugal, Castile, and Aragon. In 1469 the union of Castile and Aragon was assured by the marriage of Isabella of Castile with Ferdinand of Aragon. In 1474 Isabella succeeded to the throne of Castile, and the golden period of Spanish history commenced. Spain developed with extraordinary rapidity. The anarchical power of the feudal nobles

was suppressed, peace and order were established in the land. "The Knight and the Squire, who had formerly oppressed the labouring man, were intimidated by the fear of that justice which was certain to be executed on all. The roads were swept clear of robbers; the castles, the strongholds of violence, were thrown down; and the whole nation, restored to tranquillity and order, looked for no other redress than that afforded by the operation of the laws." So wrote a contemporary. Spain suddenly took her place—a leading place—among the great powers of Europe.

The new monarchy was before all things Catholic, and all its actions, which have left a mark on future history, are influenced by religious feeling. The Inquisition was introduced in the "Spanish" form in 1481. Its immediate object was the forcible conversion of the Jews, who were present in Spain in great numbers, and had acquired great influence in the state. It acted also on many occasions as a convenient weapon in the hands of the crown for the punishment of political opponents against whom religious charges could be brought. The Inquisition was popular, and it was in harmony with the ideas of the age; its greatest excesses belong to a later period; but it must be regarded as one of the forces which ultimately drove Spain from her high place in Europe to one of humiliation and impotence in international affairs.

The new rulers from the first had intended to turn their arms against what remained of the Moorish power. Little but Granada now remained, and clearly Granada **The conquest of Granada.** was unable to resist. Had the Mahomedan world been united, its arms, which had forty years before conquered Constantinople, might have defended the last stronghold of Islam in the West. But the Turks had no sympathy with the Moors, and when the attack came in 1489, the Moors could only rely upon their own resources. Queen Isabella herself, inspired with high religious enthusiasm, was present with the assailants. The siege of Granada began in 1491, and in January, 1492, the lovely city surrendered, and the silver cross, which had led the crusading host, was raised on the highest tower of the city.

Of the geographical discoveries of the age something will be said in the chapter on the Renaissance. It is only necessary here to recall that the large majority of the Geographical explorers who revealed to the wondering eyes of Europe new worlds in the East and in the West sailed from the Spanish peninsula under the patronage of the princes of Aragon, Castile, or Portugal. By reason of these discoveries Spain and Portugal rose to a dazzling height in the eyes of contemporaries. They had hardly ceased to struggle for existence at home when they appeared as the greatest of world-powers. The vast lands of which they claimed possession were believed to give them strength and wealth. It may be questioned whether they did not really contribute to the fall of the country. Spain fell under the burden of her empire.

## 2. THE SCANDINAVIAN STATES

The lands, which are now called Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, were inhabited by a race remotely akin to the Germans of Central Europe. They were slow to enter the circle of European culture, and were the last of the races of Western Europe to adopt Christianity. Yet their influence upon Western Europe was great. We have seen how during the ninth and tenth centuries the invasions of the Northmen checked or altered the whole course of European development. Under Canute, well known to us as King of England, it seemed as though a vast Scandinavian state was to be founded embracing England, Denmark, Norway, and the south-western parts of Sweden. Under Canute's rule, too, Christianity became the faith of all his dominions, which made rapid progress in civilization. But upon his death in 1035 his dominions broke up and were never destined to form a political unity again. But in the fourteenth century Denmark had become a powerful state, and under Waldemar III. (1340-1375) entered into the furious rivalry with the Hanseatic League. In the struggle that arose King Waldemar was defeated, but Denmark remained a strong power, and proved in the end

a victorious rival to the great cities of the League. Upon the death of Waldemar his daughter Margaret, first as Regent and then as Queen, ruled with great skill and determination, and opened up for the Scandinavian lands a prospect as bright as that which they had possessed under King Canute. By good fortune, diplomacy, and successful war she became **1397. The** Queen over Sweden and Norway as well as over **Edict of** Denmark, and in 1397 the Edict of Kalmar declared that the three kingdoms should always have the same ruler, although each should keep its laws and constitution unchanged. Much in European history would have been different if this union had been permanent; but in the fifteenth century it broke down. Norway and Denmark remained united, but Sweden drifted away into independence, which later developed into fierce hostility.

### 3. POLAND AND RUSSIA

It is necessary to say something of the Slavonic peoples who lay beyond the eastern frontier of German civilization, **Rurik the** in order to prepare the reader for the important **Northman.** part which they were to play in later centuries.

In early Russian history it will be enough to emphasize three points. (1) The history of Russia begins with the entry **Christi-** of the Norsemen into the country under Rurik **anity in** in 862. This is described by the Russian historians **Russia.** as being, not a conquest, but a voluntary subordination of the Russians, who were weary of anarchy, to rulers of whose prowess they had heard. "Our country is large and rich, but there is no order in it, come and rule over us," are the words of this famous invitation. With the arrival of Rurik the country emerged into definite form, and some approach to settled order. (2) In 988 the Czar Vladimir accepted Christian baptism, and the new faith rapidly mastered the country. The Czar had examined Judaism, Mahomedanism, Roman Catholicism, and the "orthodox" Christianity of Constantinople. For reasons both personal and political, he determined to accept Christianity in its Eastern form, and at the same time married Anna the sister of the reigning emperor.

The decision of Vladimir has been one of the great formative influences in Russian history. With the faith of Constantinople came also the despotic ideas of the Eastern empire, and the divergence between the creed and Church governments of East and West, kept Russia for long aloof from the culture of Western Europe. (3) In the thirteenth century the invasion of the Mongol Tartars swept over Russia. The native army was crushed by Zenghis Khan in 1223 at Kalka near the sea of Azov, and in successive invasions the Tartar rule spread victoriously over the whole country. The invasion caused a great decline in prosperity and civilization; but probably the Tartar conquest contributed ultimately to strengthen the unity of the race and the despotism of the government; for a common disaster at the hands of a foreign foe most quickly teaches a sense of nationality, and the people will readily submit to a despotic government, if only it prove strong enough to save them from the oppressor.

Poland, with a land of the same flat and monotonous description as that of Central Russia, with a race and language nearly identical to those of Russia, developed on almost exactly opposite lines. While Russia fell under the rule of an absolute monarchy, and by its monarchs was guided on a career of unexampled territorial expansion, Poland, on the contrary, almost from the first sacrificed the unity of the state to the dangerous independence of the nobles, and after a brief period of prosperity began to decline in strength, internally and externally, until at the end of the eighteenth century she disappeared from the state system of Europe, and her territories were divided among her more powerful rivals. It is difficult to account for the complete contrast between these two branches of the same race; but two prominent features of Russian history are absent in Polish. The Poles adopted Christianity in the Roman form, while Russia took hers from Constantinople, and they were never conquered by the Tartars, though they often suffered from them.

Next to the acceptance of Christianity the chief event in Polish history before the end of the fifteenth century was the

victory won at Tannenberg in 1410 over the Knights of the Teutonic order who had won for Christianity and German culture a long stretch along the Baltic coast. **1410. Battle of Tannenberg.** The king, whose name is associated with the victory was Jagello, Prince of Lithuania, who, as King of Poland, took the name of Ladislas. His dynasty reigned in Poland until 1572. Poland was thus brought up to the shores of the Baltic, and a possibility of commercial expansion opened out before her. But she was little fitted to take advantage of her chances. The Poles showed no gifts for commerce. There were towns in Poland, but they were inhabited by Germans and Jews. The nobles of Poland. The characteristic social product of Poland was the noble landowner, resident on his large estate, and surrounded by his serfs, over whom he ruled with absolute power. The aim of these nobles (the *szlachta*, as they were called) was to cut down the power of the monarchy in the true spirit of feudalism, to reduce the central government to impotence, and to make of Poland an aristocratic republic. They succeeded in their aims, and the ruin of Poland was the result.

#### 4. CONQUEST OF CONSTANTINOPLE BY THE TURKS

In 1453 Western Europe was startled by the news that the Turks had stormed Constantinople. The end of the long tale had come. The city which Constantine had founded, which had carried on the traditions and the government of ancient Rome when the empire had fallen in the West, which had been century after century the chief defence of Christian Europe against Mahomedan invasion, was at last in the hands of the infidel.

The Eastern empire had never recovered from the effects of the fourth crusade. Its territories had sunk to insignificance. It was harassed by the never-ceasing conflict of the Eastern and Western Churches, and by political feuds and factions besides. No element of strength remained to it except the splendid city, with its unsurpassed situation for commerce, and its defences which

had never been forced by any enemy, except when treason gave assistance from inside. Wealth, troops, statesmanship, had all gone. Meanwhile its enemies were more dangerous than ever. The history of Islam is the history of **Rise of the** periods of decay followed by revival under some **Turks.**

new chieftain and some unexhausted race. The Ottoman Turks had risen into importance in the thirteenth century. They advanced rapidly under a series of warlike and energetic chiefs, crushed the Serbian kingdom in the battle of Kossovo (1398), and thus won a firm footing in Europe.

They owed much of their success to their chiefs; they owed much also to the strange body of troops called the Janissaries. These were the children of Christian **The Janis-** parents, who had been handed over as tribute or **saries.** taken by violence, and then trained from childhood up for war. All possibility of discovering their parents was destroyed. Their camp was their home, military honour stood to them in the place of patriotism and religion. There is no other body of troops in history with which they can be compared, and the rise and decay of the Turkish power is closely connected with them.

Constantinople would probably have fallen half a century earlier if the Turks had not been diverted by the attacks of Timour the Tartar from the East. The great **Post-** Turkish Sultan Bajazet was defeated and taken **ponement** prisoner by the Tartars. But soon those wild **of the** conquerors passed, and the Turks returned to their **fall of** great task. Individual crusaders came to fight **Constanti-** against them. The Emperor Sigismund, John the Fearless **nople.** of Burgundy, John Hunyadi of Hungary are names that deserve honourable mention for their efforts to stave off the doom that was threatening Constantinople. But in Europe generally religious unity and religious fervour were declining, and no serious attempt was made to save the great city.

Mahomet II. began the siege in the spring of 1453. The last Christian ruler of Constantinople was a Constantine, and he was not altogether unworthy of the name he bore. The Turks brought an army of 150,000 and the garrison of the city did



not rise to 10,000. The siege was full of memorable incidents. The huge though rude cannon of the Turks, fired with much difficulty and danger, were effective in hammering the walls. Mahomet brought his ships into the Golden Horn, the mouth of which was protected by a boom, by dragging them overland. May 29, 1453, was the date of the final assault. The emperor fell in the onrush of the Janissaries. The city was devoted to plunder, and the Muezzin called the faithful to worship according to Mahomedan rites in the cathedral of Santa Sophia.

The Turkish victory might have been prevented by a little resolution on the part of the Christian powers; and, if it had been prevented for a time, it might never have occurred. In little more than two centuries decline set in in the Turkish power, and Turkish armies would never have threatened Vienna if Constantinople had remained a fortress of European civilization. For four centuries and a half Europe has been paying dearly, in blood and treasure and confusion, for her failure to reinforce the scanty garrison of Constantinople in 1453.

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For Spain: Watt's *Spain* (to 1492), in the *Stories of the Nations*; Yonge, *Christians and Moors in Spain*; Hallam, *Europe in the Middle Ages*; Burke, *History of Spain*; Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella*; Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Moors in Spain*. For the Slavonic Kingdoms: Morfill's *Poland*; Rappoport's *Russia*; Rambaud's *Histoire de Russie*. For the fall of Constantinople: Lane-Poole's *Turkey*; Oman's *Byzantine Empire*, Pears, *Destruction of the Greek Empire*; *Constantinople*, by W. H. Hutton.

## CHAPTER XXII

### Louis XI. and Charles the Bold

THE French monarchy is so much the most important force in the politics of Europe at the end of the fifteenth century that it will be well to examine its growth and development before we turn to "the Renaissance" and the intellectual movement of the time.

During the hundred years' war a new and strange power was growing up on the north and eastern frontiers of France—the power of the dukes of Burgundy. We have already seen the origin of that power. King John the Good, who in spite of his name brought endless woes to France, had not annexed the Duchy of Burgundy to France, when the old feudal line died out, but had given it instead to his son Philip. He hoped that family affection would be strong enough to keep Philip and his descendants faithful to the crown of France; but we have seen how Burgundy took the side of England during the great war, and, when the war ended, Burgundy was at first the rival and soon the determined enemy of the French crown.

During the century that elapsed after the first grant of the Duchy to Philip the possessions of the ducal house had increased enormously. The first duke laid the foundation for the future destinies of his house when, through his wife, he inherited Flanders, Artois, and other districts in the Netherlands. From this time the dukes of Burgundy, though they remained feudally dependent on France for a part of their territories, possessed still greater territories upon which the kings of France had no claim, but which were in theory subordinate to the empire. Then in 1428 a richer inheritance still fell to the Burgundian house. Philip the Good, the third duke of the new line, made himself master of Holland, Friesland, Zeeland, and Hainault.

Philip the Good thus ruled over a large extent of territory embracing most of what is now Belgium and Holland as well as the County and Duchy of Burgundy lying on either side of the river Saône. Its wealth and splendour were even more remarkable than its size. No part of Europe, not even the cities of North Italy, had a more vigorous commercial life than was to be found in the cities of the Low Countries. The woollen trade was the great source of their wealth, but they also engaged with profit in fishing and in general commerce. Bruges, Ypres, Ghent, Tournai, and many other towns were the rivals of Venice and Florence in the beauty of their public

Growth  
of the  
Bur-  
gundian  
power.

Burgundy  
and the  
empire.

Prosperity  
of the  
Bur-  
gundian  
territories.

buildings and the products of their painters. But the government of these rich and widespread territories presented many **Lack of** problems. There was no geographical unity, and **unity.** no political uniformity about them. Lorraine and Alsace were interposed between the County and Duchy of Burgundy and the duke's possessions in the Netherlands. Politically the territories of the duke were still more divided. They consisted of many separate provinces each with its own constitution, its own privileges, its own ambitions, and individual cities such as Ghent and Bruges were almost independent republics. The policy of the dukes was therefore clearly marked out by their position. They must try to join their southern provinces to their northern ones by the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine; they must try to give some common constitution or system of administration to the whole; and they must try to shake off the fetters of feudal dependence by which they were bound to the kings of France on one side and to the emperors on the other, and appear before Europe as an independent state.

Until the very eve of irretrievable disaster fortune smiled on the prospects of the dukes. By coming over to the side of France at the end of the hundred years' war they had gained certain concessions of territory from the kings of France, (and especially had got the promise of the cession of the towns on the Somme, whereby their frontier would have been pushed far towards the heart of France. Later Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, laid his hands on the districts of Alsace and Lorraine whose possession he so ardently coveted. He got Alsace, or rather a part of it, as security for moneys which he had advanced to its needy overlord, Sigismund of Austria, and he assumed the protectorship of the Bold. Lorraine during the minority of its duke. In neither district was he sovereign, but his grasp would not be easy to shake off in either. He was supported in his own territories by a wealthy, warlike, and on the whole a loyal population, and it seemed that he might set up again a middle kingdom between France and Germany such as had come into being for a time upon the disruption of the empire of Charles the Great. The establishment of such a state on a

permanent basis would have profoundly modified the history of Europe.

But it was not to be. The career of the last duke, Charles the Bold, brought him into constant rivalry and occasional collision with Louis XI., the astute king of France **Battles of** at whose career and policy we must look in a **Granson** moment; for, though French soldiers had little **and Morat.** to do with the overthrow of Charles, French diplomacy and intrigue had a great deal. It was the peasant mountaineers of Switzerland whose arms wrought his overthrow. They disliked his possession of upper Alsace, for they had their own eyes on that desirable land. When the cruelties of Charles' agent, Hagenbach, brought about a revolt in Alsace the Swiss came to the help of the rebels, and in 1476 first at Granson and then at Morat the feudal chivalry of Burgundy went down before the Swiss pikes, as the chivalry of Austria had gone down at Morgarten and at Sempach. The success of Alsace encouraged Lorraine also to rise. Charles flung himself fiercely upon the province and laid siege **Death of** to Nancy. But in a battle fought against a re- **Charles** lieving force, in which a Swiss force played an im- **the Bold.** portant part, the duke was beaten and slain. He had no son to succeed him. His only daughter Mary was unmarried. The future of these important territories was at stake in her marriage; but it will be well before we trace their fortunes to follow the contemporary history of France.

King Charles VII. (the "victorious" and the "well served") saw the strength of France rapidly increasing during his last years, but in his family life he was troubled **Louis XI.** by intrigues and quarrels. Between him and his eldest son and heir, Louis, there was bitter antagonism; for Louis allied himself with the forces of aristocratic feudalism, and in the end fled from France. He found generous shelter at the court of the Duke of Burgundy, and formed a friendship, or what seemed such, with Charles the Bold, whose fortunes we have already glanced at. When in 1461 Charles VII. died, and Louis was called to the throne as Louis XI., he was conducted over the borders by a great display of the military forces of Burgundy.

It was a strange man who thus ascended the throne of France. He had no kinship with the monarchs of the Middle

**Character and aims of Louis XI.** Ages. There are some features in the character of the Emperor Frederick II. which resemble his, and a parallel may be found to much of his policy in the tyrants of Italy, in the Visconti or the

Sforzas. Henry VII. of England would have understood him, and was probably influenced by his example. Courtly ceremonial and the splendours of royalty had no attraction for him; the ideals of feudalism and chivalry made no appeal to him; nor was he influenced by religion in his public life. His actions show that he held that in politics it is success alone which matters, and that all methods are justifiable which lead to success. He was ready to use cruelty, treachery, and fraud if they suited his purpose. "He who knows not how to deceive knows not how to reign," was a favourite motto of his, and certainly he had this qualification for reigning. Yet history cannot regard him as a mere superstitious and hypocritical tyrant. He worked and he sinned, not for himself,

**Louis XI.'s services to France.** but for France, with which he identified himself entirely. He completed the settlement which had been begun by Charles VII., and he was one of the chief authors of the greatness of France in the sixteenth century. In character, method, and principles he is in direct and absolute antagonism with Saint Louis; but like him he worked for the unity of France, and for its efficient and uniform organization under the monarchy.

His reign is full of interesting incidents, and there is no wonder that writers of romance and drama have gone to it for plot and story. He found a worthy biographer

**Philip de Commines.** in Philip de Commines, who was at first attached to his great rival, Charles of Burgundy. The

history of Commines is one of the landmarks of the age. Like his master he had emerged completely from the characteristic influences of the Middle Ages. Neither Catholicism nor feudalism, nor chivalry, nor the crusading idea had any hold upon him. He admired chiefly subtlety and dexterity devoted to the service of the state.

But though the reign is so rich in incidents it may be very

shortly summarized. Louis XI. struggled against the claims of the aristocracy as all kings of France had to do. Feudalism of the old and normal type was nearly done with.

Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt had ruined the reputation of the nobles as well as destroyed many noble families. The peculiar characteristic of the opposition which Louis XI. encountered is to be found in the fact that nearly all of his chief opponents were men sprung from the royal family, descendants of Saint Louis and Princes of the Lilies, as the French called those who were descended from royalty. The Duke of Brittany was indeed a feudal noble of the old type confronting Louis XI. with the independent power which the dukes of Normandy or the counts of Provence had once possessed; but the Duke of Berri, one of the worst enemies of the crown, was the king's own brother; the Duke of Bourbon was a descendant of Saint Louis, and was married to the king's sister; the Duke of Orleans was a near relation of the king, and was married to the king's daughter; Charles of Burgundy was a distant cousin, and was married to the king's sister. But neither relationship nor intermarriage availed to keep these men in loyal subordination to the crown. The kings of France constantly found that their worst enemies were those of their own household, and this was especially true of Louis XI. His enemies disguised their ambitions and their jealousies under a care for the "public weal," but they fought for privileges which, if granted to them, would have led to the dismemberment of France. Louis failed more than once when he met his enemies in the battlefield, but intrigue succeeded where force failed. The contemporary Wars of the Roses were mixed up with the struggle in France, for the house of Burgundy was connected with the Yorkists, while Louis XI. favoured the Lancastrians.

Resistance  
of the  
princes to  
the royal  
power.

We cannot follow the twists and turns of the long controversy, in which Louis XI. was never more dangerous than when he was apparently beaten. Enough that the crown triumphed over all its opponents and added very materially to the domains of the French crown. Brittany, indeed, still remained at the time of his death, independent and defiant; but there was only a daughter to succeed

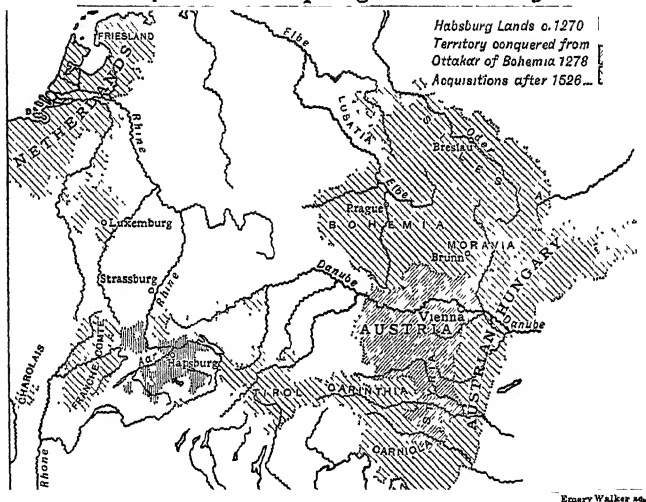
Brittany.

to the duchy, and it was already probable that Brittany too would soon be absorbed in the territories of the French king. In many instances what was won back had been once royal domain, and had then been unwisely ceded as an " appanage " to a French prince ; but substantial gains were made of new territory. Anjou was brought into the royal domain ; Provence which lay outside of the boundaries of the French kingdom fell to the French king by inheritance (1481).

**Louis XI.** These were great gains ; but greater still came  
**and** as a result of the defeat and death of Charles the  
**Mary of** Bold of Burgundy at Nancy in 1477. Louis XI.  
**Burgundy.** hoped at first to make himself master of the whole of the rich Burgundian territories ; for Charles had left but one daughter, and if she were married to the king's son, who afterwards reigned as Charles VIII., the gain to France would be as great as what came when the English were expelled. But Mary of Burgundy rejected the French overtures and regarded, rightly, Louis XI. as the worst enemy of her house. She married, instead of a French prince, Maximilian of Austria, already the probable heir of the Imperial crown. There is no more fateful marriage than this in all history, though its full significance could not be guessed at the time. The greater part of the territories of Burgundy were thus joined to those of the house of Hapsburg. That was a serious change in the balance of power in Europe. But in the next generation the results were still more serious, for Philip, the issue of this marriage, married Joanna, daughter and heiress of the royal house of Spain, and their son Charles (the grandson of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian of Austria) inherited all that Spain possessed and all that the House of Hapsburg possessed, which included most of what the house of Burgundy had once possessed ; and added to all these real possessions the vague glories of the title of emperor. We shall have to revert to this in another chapter ; but the sixteenth century and the history of the Reformation were influenced at almost every point by this fateful and romantic marriage which was carried out in 1477 in defiance of Louis XI.)

But though Louis XI. did not win all at which he aimed, he won much. He forced Mary and Maximilian to cede to him on the north the valley of the Somme, and a slice from the south of Flanders, and in the east the Duchy of Burgundy, which lay for the most part to the west of the Saône. Louis died in 1483, but it will be well to carry the story of the acquisitions of France

## Development of the Hapsburg Power down to 1526



## Rise of the Hapsburgs.

a few years further. Louis XI. was succeeded by Charles VIII., and five years after his accession an opportunity offered for making one last addition to Charles VIII. the domains of the French crown. Brittany was inhabited by a Celtic race, separate from the rest of the country, neither speaking nor understanding the French tongue. The coasts possessed valuable harbours; its population was used to a seafaring life. It had played an important part in most of the risings against the French kings. But now the death of the duke in 1488, and the descent of



the duchy to his daughter Anne offered an opportunity, which French diplomacy was quick to seize. Already **Brittany** Louis XI. had tried to win the prize for his son **added to** in spite of an earlier betrothal. Now Charles **the Crown.** VIII. made war upon the territories of the Duchess Anne, and at the same time offered marriage. She bowed perforce to her fate, and became Queen of France. There remained now only one great feudal state, the lands of the House of Bourbon. With that exception France was united under the rule of the monarchy. France was a national unity, as no country in Europe was with the exception of England.

The government of France remained what it had been under Charles VII. Louis XI. encouraged the growth of towns and industry, favoured the introduction of printing, was the ally of the middle class, and the protector of the peasantry. Parlements were established in the Provinces to do there what the Parlement of Paris had already done so efficiently, namely, to enlarge the royal power at the expense of all rival authorities. France was compact and efficiently governed. Her commerce and wealth were rapidly growing. A great part awaited her in the European drama which would next present itself.

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In addition to the ordinary histories of France, Miss Putnam's *Charles the Bold*, and the introductory chapters of Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*; Freeman's Essay on *Charles the Bold*.

## CHAPTER XXIII

British History from 1307 to 1485; the failure of  
Parliamentary Government

THE thirteenth century marks for England, as for the greater part of Europe, the culminating period of the Middle Ages. The reign of Edward I. in England, and that of <sup>England</sup> Louis IX. in France, have some contrasts, but also <sup>and</sup> many points of likeness; order established after <sup>France.</sup> confusion; the Church and the monarchy in honourable and independent partnership; in both countries, though in very different ways, an advance made towards liberty. In both countries there came a great and disastrous change: in England at the death of Edward I. (1307); in France a little later, on the death of Philip IV. in 1314.

The causes of the great change in England have been differently estimated. From one point of view they imply the failure of the parliament, whose organization is one of Edward I.'s greatest claims to fame. <sup>The</sup> The partnership between king and parliament <sup>failure</sup> had <sup>of Parlia-</sup> worked excellently, but King Edward had been <sup>ment.</sup> the predominant partner. When he died and a man altogether weaker and worse mounted the throne, parliament showed itself incapable of ruling by itself. It became the channel through which the barons pursued their egoistic and dangerous aims. The time for the Commons of England to play a decisive part in the country had not yet come. The long period of 182 years that we glance at in this chapter is characterized throughout by the selfish and dangerous power of the nobles, repressed for a time by triumphant war in France, but speedily showing itself again in the hour of defeat.

Edward II.'s reign may be very lightly passed over. It illustrates well the causes of the royal failure of the period.

**Edward II.** Edward II. gave all his confidence to Peter of  
**and Gaveston.** Gaveston, a Gascon knight. Nothing exasperated the English lords more than a foreign "favourite," and Gaveston was a particularly offensive specimen of the class. The Lords were able to force the king to submit to the paramount influence of a body of twenty-one lords (the Lords Ordainers). These men banished Gaveston, and when he landed in England in defiance of them they captured him and put him to death.

Victory in a foreign war might have saved Edward II., but there came instead humiliating defeat. Bruce had established his power in Scotland, and in 1314 Edward II. and  
**Bannockburn.** an English army tried to overthrow him. At the battle of Bannockburn the English army was wholly defeated and the independence of Scotland assured.

During the rest of his reign civil war was always present or threatening. Edward II. had to fight against his uncle, the Earl of Lancaster, and him he overthrew in  
**Civil war.** 1322. New favourites—the Despensers—took the place of Gaveston. It came to an open struggle between them and the queen, Isabella of France. She raised troops on the Continent, and when she landed in England the uprising against the king was general and irresistible. The king fled, was captured, deposed, and murdered. This was in 1327: in the space of twenty years the political credit of England had suffered disastrous eclipse.

One important constitutional step marks the reign. It was laid down in 1322 that what concerned the whole realm must be treated "by a council of the prelates, earls, and barons, and the commonalty of the realm." This decision gave the Commons a secure place in parliament.

## II

Edward III. was fourteen years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned fifty years. His reign is mainly occupied with the first half of the Hundred Years' War against France. The outline of that has been given in another chapter, and will not be repeated here. We need only follow the domestic history of the reign, but of course this is closely connected with the war. While the war was successful (and it came to no complete failure during Edward III.'s reign) it turned men's attention from politics, and kept the country quiet. When at the end the glory was swallowed up in defeat, rebellion and civil war followed swiftly.

During the first three years of Edward III.'s reign power was left in the hands of the queen-mother, Isabella, and her guilty ally, Mortimer, who between them had deposed and killed Edward II. It was a sordid period at home, and full of national humiliation abroad. In 1328, by the Treaty of Northampton, the complete independence of Scotland was recognized, and the feudal superiority of England, which had been so hotly fought for in the past, was dropped. In the previous year there had been fighting in Gascony against the King of France, and there, too, the rulers of England accepted an arrangement that left little more in the hands of England than the cities of Bordeaux and Bayonne and the immediate neighbourhood. Edward III., as he grew towards manhood, awoke to the humiliation of the Crown and the nation. He took part in a conspiracy against his mother and her paramour. Mortimer was seized and executed. Edward III. began to rule.

Edward III. cannot rank with the great kings of England. A certain glamour attaches to his name because of his great victories in France. Without those victories he would hardly have mastered the disorderly elements at home; and the war only postponed the settlement and made it more difficult. What can be said in his

favour is that he was a fine fighter in tournament or in battle, and seemed to Froissart the flower of chivalry and the greatest King of England since Arthur. But if he is the best representative of chivalry it stands condemned in him, for he was frivolous, selfish, without honour and without humanity.

Without repeating the sketch of the French war, we will note (1) some of the causes of the English victories, and (2) the cause of the war with Scotland.

(1) The English victories are especially remarkable, coming as they did after a quarter of a century of failure and disorganization. The last great battle that English soldiers had been engaged in before Crecy was Bannockburn, where certainly neither the tactics nor the spirit of the English force had appeared to promise success. Yet in the first part of the French war there grew up a belief that the English soldiers, because of their leadership, weapons, and spirit, were well-nigh invincible,

Edward III., we have said, was a fine soldier, and his whole heart was in the war, while the French kings, Philip VI. and John, were poor leaders : much turns in all wars, and especially in ancient wars, on leadership. Then there was the English long-bow, of whose influence enough has been already said. But the root cause seems this. In France

French feudalism v. English unity. feudalism was still strong ; in England it had been largely destroyed, and had given place to a state far more united than France. The French armies consisted mainly of armour-clad knights, with whom it was a point of honour to charge straight upon the enemy, neglecting all tactics, despising all other arms, and whose relations with the king were always suspicious and difficult. The English armies were very different. There were knights, of course, full of the language and ideas of chivalry, but there were also archers and infantry, whose value was perfectly understood. The predominance of the armed knight was passing all over Europe, and Crecy and Poitiers did much to hurry on the process. The English army, too, was no mere feudal levy, but consisted of troops, raised by the king's agents, paid by the king, rendering obedience to the king. The wealth of England was rapidly developing ; her soil was never seriously invaded

during the whole of the war ; the tax on the export of wool to Flanders gave Edward a vast revenue, by means of which chiefly he won the war.

(2) The English king aimed at Edinburgh almost as much as at Paris in this war, and he was fighting with Scotland before the French war broke out. There were two claimants to the Scotch throne, Edward Balliol and David ; and Edward III., after some hesitation, supported the claims of Balliol. In the fighting the balance of success lay with the English. The battle of Halidon Hill, in 1333, is the prologue to the great victories that were soon to come in France. The English fought on foot, and the long-bow did its work ; the Scotch were beaten and Berwick taken : but the English success went no further. Scotland was all the more determined to reject Balliol, because he was supported by England, and clung to David as the national king. When the French war came the Scotch inevitably took sides with the French, and David invaded England in the year of Crecy. He was defeated and taken prisoner at Neville's Cross, near Durham. He remained a prisoner in England for eleven years. When victory had come in full flood in France Edward thought there might be a chance of winning Scotland. He claimed the Scotch crown as the successor of Balliol, who had surrendered his claims, and he invaded in 1356 to make his claim good. But the Scotch were as unyielding in defeat as in victory. The English armies burnt and destroyed with horrible efficiency, but Edward was little nearer to being recognized as King of Scotland. So in 1357 King David, who had become very English during his captivity, was liberated on the promise of a heavy ransom. The sword of England, sharp and heavy as it was, could not settle either the Scotch or the French question.

The general effect of the long war with France was to create an antagonism against everything French which had not existed before. The French language was hitherto spoken at court and by many of the nobles, though English had already gone far towards displacing it. Now it was naturally a mark of

Social  
effects of  
the French  
war.

patriotism to use French as little as possible. In 1362 there were two significant events. English was recognized as the language of the law courts, and the king's speech at the opening of parliament was given in English.

The hostility to everything French had an influence, too, upon the religious life of England. The "Babylonish Captivity" went on during the whole of Edward III.'s reign. The Popes were at Avignon, a papal city, but so close to France that they were believed to be in the power of the French kings. So the papal power and all that came from it was suspected in England as it had never been before. This produced its mark on legislation. The Popes had been accustomed from time to time to nominate to church livings, both great and small, in England, and the country had hitherto not much resented the practice. But parliament in 1351, by the Statute of Provisors, forbade it. The power of the Pope to act as a court of appeal for a large number of cases was an even more important support of the papal power in England. By the Statute of Præmunire (1353) any carrying of law suits to a foreign tribunal (the Papacy is not mentioned, but the meaning is not doubtful) was declared punishable by forfeiture of property and imprisonment. The tribute promised by King John to the Pope, which had not been paid for many years, was now definitely repudiated. The same anti-papal tendency was also visible in the minds and thoughts of men. English literature comes forward at a bound, in Langland, the author of "Piers Plowman," and, above all others, in Chaucer. "Piers Plowman" is full of invectives against churchmen and the abuses of the Church. A little later Wycliffe attacked the very foundations of the doctrine and organization of the Roman Catholic Church.

Another reaction of the war is visible in the growth of the English parliament. The king could not afford to have domestic quarrels while the great war was raging, and the war was at first popular. The members of parliament were during this reign first definitely organized into the two chambers of Lords and Commons; it was a great thing that the French system of

three chambers was avoided. The right of parliament to grant taxation was again affirmed. At the end of the reign the shadow of the failure in the French war lay broad across the land. The king was old and his will was weak. He fell under the evil influence of Alice Perrers. Then there arose parliamentary opposition and factions among the nobles. It is a hint of the Wars of the Roses, which came when complete defeat in France had been suffered. The Black Prince, Edward III.'s great soldier son, played a good and patriotic part in these events, and his brother, John of Gaunt, a bad one. But no important result had been reached when Edward III. died in 1377.

The Black Death raged in England in 1348 and 1349. Our country has never known such a visitation. The disease was probably carried by rats, and the medical science of the day was quite incapable of dealing with it. Rich and poor, townsmen and countrymen suffered equally. It is impossible to calculate with certainty the extent of its ravages, but it is generally believed that at least one-third of the population of England perished. An immediate result was great shortage of labour and a consequent demand for higher wages. The economic un- settlement of the country produced the Statute of Labourers in 1351, which attempted to fix both prices and wages at the point at which they stood before the visitation of the plague. The Statute was ineffective despite the appointment of special justices to enforce it. The economic situation was too complex to be solved by a simple Act of Parliament. The Peasants' Revolt, which broke out in 1381, was already preparing.

It is necessary to glance at Irish history for a moment. If the efforts of England had not been exhausted by the French war, the force and the statesmanship of the country would have been turned towards Ireland, and might have done something to lay the foundation of a better system. But while Edward III. pursued the phantom of a French Crown, the English garrison in Ireland grew weaker. Edward Bruce, the brother of the Scotch king, had attempted to make himself King of Ireland. He failed ;



but the English Government had no better expedient for strengthening the power of England in Ireland than a law (the Statute of Kilkenny), which was as ineffective as the Statute of Labourers. The Anglo-Normans were being absorbed into the Irish population, as the Normans were being absorbed into the population of England. The object of the new Statute was to prevent this process. No Englishman was to wear his hair in the Irish fashion, or to speak Irish, or to maintain an Irish bard; no Irishman was to be admitted into the English Church; there was to be as little intercourse as possible between the two races; absentee English landlords were ordered to return to Ireland.

### III

Richard II., son of Edward the Black Prince, was only ten years of age when he came to the unsteady English throne.

**Richard II.** His own relations were perhaps the chief of the many dangers with which he was threatened. **and his uncles.** Edward III. had had many children. The Black Prince was the eldest and the best. His brothers, Lionel, Duke of Clarence; John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster; Edmond, Duke of York; Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, were ambitious, jealous, intriguing men. The youth of the king made the regency a prize worth struggling for. From their rivalries we may trace the subsequent outbreak of the Wars of the Roses.

The country was disillusioned by the failure of the French war. It had pursued the conquest of France with eagerness. The land was full of soldiers accustomed to the lawless violence that was practised in the French wars, and ready to employ the same methods in England.

Religion and the Church, which in the past had often given stability to English life, were now an additional cause of unsettlement. The century saw the beginning of the movements which culminated in the Protestantism of the sixteenth century. Wycliffe, a great Oxford scholar and theologian, had delivered a direct

attack on the beliefs of the Church. He declared that the Pope was not the head of the Church; that the **Wycliffe** scriptures were the only basis of religious know- and his ledge, and should be made accessible in English; teaching. that the ceremonies of the Church were useless or worse; and that the doctrine of transubstantiation was false. He was not content to utter those opinions in books that would only reach a few, but organized "poor priests" who were to carry his doctrines to the people at large, and made a translation of the Bible. No definite connection has been traced between Wycliffe and the Peasants' Revolt; but there are plenty of analogies to show us that this religious controversy was the natural precursor of revolution.

Economic causes of various kinds were also working powerfully in the same direction. The merchant class was burdened with heavy taxation. But it was in the **Economic** agricultural classes that the ferment was most ferment. serious. There is no reason to think that the peasants were in great distress; it is not out of mere distress that revolutions arise. The social system of feudalism was breaking down; villeinage, or serfdom, was declining, as landlords found it paid them better to substitute money payment for the enforcement of labour; the effort of the Statute of Labourers to keep wages down had failed, but the attempt was galling. There was a general, ill-defined desire for change.

A weak government found itself confronted with widespread opposition, arising partly out of harder conditions, but chiefly out of new ideas. There was the demand for liberty and equality, though the words would not be invented yet for nearly four centuries. The situation was not altogether unlike that which produced the French Revolution.

In 1381 the revolt blazed out in many parts of England at the same time. John Ball, a priest, and Wat Tyler, a peasant, are the most prominent names, but we **The** know of none who deserve to be called leaders. **peasants** The rising carried all before it for a time. **revolt.** London was occupied by the insurgents. They were especially bitter against the lawyers and their parchments. But the movement was probably too ill-defined, too leaderless, to gain any

permanent victory. The young king (he was only fourteen) and Walworth, the Lord Mayor of London, confronted the insurgents boldly in Smithfield. Wat Tyler was killed. The king addressed them in gallant words, and the insurgents surrendered or dispersed. The revolt was then cruelly suppressed everywhere. Villeinage was not abolished in spite of the promises that had been made. But the whole economic tendency was against it, and it soon passed away from English life.

We must not try to disentangle the confusion of the rest of Richard's reign. The person and power of the king were in constant danger at the hands of the great nobles who surrounded his throne. It is not the old feudal nobility that we are dealing with now, but a new race, deriving their wealth from recent grants and often related to the king; men without the traditions and the restraints of the old nobility. Richard was not a great man, and he held, as most kings of that age held, the view "that the laws were in his breast and that he alone could change the statutes of the realm." But the nobles against whom he struggled—Gloucester and Arundel, Warwick, Nottingham, and the king's cousin, Henry of Lancaster—cannot be accepted as champions of parliamentary liberties, or of any cause that was not selfish. To possess the crown or to control it meant power and wealth; and the nobles gathered round their quarry like beasts of prey, and, like beasts of prey, quarrelled when they had pulled their quarry down.

After much humiliation the king was finally victorious in 1397. He banished the Earl of Hereford (who was soon to be known as Henry of Lancaster and King Henry IV.) and the Earl of Norfolk. He seemed secure now. He had made a peace with France and taken a French princess as his second wife. He passed over to Ireland to deal with the difficult questions that awaited him there. In his absence Henry of Lancaster landed in England. The ground had been well prepared. The nobles flocked to the rebel standard, and when Richard hurried back it was to find that all classes had fallen away from him; to surrender; and to pass to an obscure death in Pontefract Castle.

## IV

The Wars of the Roses are usually dated as beginning in 1453. But in a sense all English history after the death of Edward III. belongs to the Wars of the Roses; the factions and the spirit that broke out in 1453 had been fermenting for more than a century. There had been many little outbursts before the final explosion.

Henry IV. claimed the realm as being heir by descent and conquest: "through that right that God of His grace has sent me with the help of my kin and friends to **Accession** recover it; the which realm was in point to be of Henry undone for default of governance and undoing of **IV.**

the laws." Parliament accepted his claim; and it was by the support of parliament and the men who controlled it that Henry IV. held his uneasy throne for fourteen years. He was an able man—abler certainly than Richard II.; and his tact, nerve, and military skill kept the crown on his head in spite of the efforts of many enemies to strike it down. His own triumph had shown the possibility **Risings** of successful rebellion; and there were plenty who **against** Henry IV. desired to follow his example. The partisans of Richard II. were easily beaten down; but there was more serious danger behind. Wales broke out under Owen Glendower into a struggle for Welsh independence, and secured the alliance of some of the English nobles of the border and of the great house of Percy in Northumberland. The battle of Shrewsbury in 1403 prevented the Percies from joining hands with the Welsh, and they were subsequently defeated in detail. After that Henry IV. reigned more securely, but the very end of his reign was marked by bitter intrigues at court, in which the king's son, Prince Henry, took part, often against the king. These were still in progress when the king died (1413).

The reign had seen a great increase of religious persecution. It is remarkable how little of it there had been in the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II. **Religious** The arch-heretic Wycliffe had ended his days in **history of** Henry IV.'s peace at Lutterworth. Henry IV., however, **reign.** wanted the support of the clergy, and made no opposition to

the passing of a statute "for the burning of heretics" (1401). Under this statute several of the followers of Wycliffe showed their sincerity by their death.

The king was in no position to resist parliament, which became under the Lancastrian kings more powerful than it ever was again until the seventeenth century. Two points may be noted. Henry IV. was more than once forced to appoint his ministers at the dictation of parliament. And it was during his reign that the House of Commons gained the right of initiating all money bills.

The accession of Henry V. did not at first create a more settled condition. He had at once to face two serious attacks on his power. The first seems to have arisen chiefly from the repressive religious policy of the Lancastrian house, under which, since the passing of the Act "concerning the burning of heretics," many of Wycliffe's followers had suffered. Political motives were, however, mixed with it. Henry struck hard, and we hear little of Lollardy from this time on. Then just as Henry was embarking for France there came another plot, the leader in which was the king's own cousin, the Earl of Cambridge, who was at once executed for high treason.

For the rest of his reign Henry found a charm against sedition in victory over the "old enemy" of France. Agincourt was a more remarkable victory even than Crecy, and had more important consequences. When the King of England entered Paris and was recognized as successor to the King of France, Englishmen were mesmerized into forgetfulness of the usurpations of the house of Lancaster. The early death of Henry V., in 1422, makes it impossible to say how long the charm would have worked. Baronial anarchy quickly came to its own again in the next reign.

## V

Henry VI., at the death of his father, was nine months old. None could foresee that as part of his inheritance from his French mother he would have the mental weakness that had already shown itself in the **Henry VI.** house of Valois. But all could foresee a long regency. An old proverb prophesied woe to a kingdom governed by a child, and it was soon verified in England.

The regent was the king's uncle, John, Duke of Bedford. He held the title of Protector. He represented all that was efficient in the government of England, and carried **The ques-** on the war in France for some years with success. **tion of the** The fortunes of France sank to their lowest point **regency.** in 1424, when the battle of Verneuil was won by the English. But victory could no longer charm the factions of the English nobles into silence, and soon the English troops ceased to win victories. Joan of Arc appeared in 1429. While Bedford fought in France, another of the king's uncles, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, guided the government in England. He embarrassed Bedford by his policy both at home and abroad. He was displaced in 1429 by the king's great-uncle, Cardinal Beaufort. Outside of the French war the history of England gives us at this time little but the story of personal intrigue and faction. In 1435 Bedford died, after rejecting honourable overtures for peace made by France.

Few countries have a more dismal history than ours during the following years. There was still vigour and virtue in the country, no doubt, but there was little of them in politics. As the king grew up he showed himself **The dismal** a really beautiful nature; religious in the best **character** sense of the word; peace-loving, forgiving, charit- **of the** able; devoted to the cause of education. But he was quite out of place in the iron time, and hardly exercised any influence on the course of events. The court and council were torn by the rivalries of Cardinal Beaufort and the Duke of Gloucester. An unfortunate marriage was arranged for the king with

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Margaret of Anjou, who brought the king neither dowry nor wisdom. In 1447 both Gloucester and Beaufort died, and the Duke of Suffolk became the king's chief adviser. He has not a good reputation as a statesman, but his task was an impossible one. In 1449 came the end of all the hopes of a French Empire for England. The English were driven out

**Collapse of English power in France.** of Normandy, and they were not likely to keep their foothold in the South of France much longer. English pride had been swollen so long by the French victories, and her avarice sharpened by the booty that had accompanied them, that there was certain to be violent reaction against the government that was in office when the house of cards fell.

First Suffolk was impeached, and tried to flee to France to escape the certain consequences. But his vessel was stopped in the Channel, and he was taken out and murdered **Murder of Suffolk.** (1450). In the same year there came the rising of Jack Cade. It has none of the interest which belongs to the peasants' revolt; but serves to show that anger against the government for its failures and incompetence was not confined to the aristocracy of England. The insurgents came chiefly from Kent. They seemed very dangerous. The king fled. London was occupied. Then there came reaction, and Cade was slain and the rebellion crushed. Even the rebellions of this dreary time have little interest!

The outbreak of the Wars of the Roses can best be dated from the year 1453. In that year the English were expelled from the South of France, and henceforth held **Beginning of the Wars of the Roses.** nothing but Calais. Then the brain of Henry VI. became clouded, and the appointment of a regent was necessary; the queen, Margaret of Anjou, bore a son. All these events stand in close relation to the claims which are now put forward by the house of York.

Richard, Duke of York, was great-grandson of Edward III., and, if no child had been born to Henry VI., he was the legal heir to the throne. He had seen service in Ireland and in France, and had acquitted himself well in **Richard, Duke of York.** both places. Against the weak government, or no government, of Henry VI. he seemed to represent energy and

efficiency. Furthermore, he was immensely rich, having inherited from his mother the earldoms of March and Ulster. He is a good type of the great nobles of the time. They did not belong to the old feudalism, but had amassed great wealth in land by royal favour and carefully arranged marriages. They lived in castles that were beginning to be fortified again. They were surrounded by retainers who would support them against all opponents; and they were ready to defy both Crown and parliament, for though the "liberties" and "privileges" of parliament expanded under the Lancastrian kings, its real power was small. The elections were controlled by the nobility, and the parliament that was founded on them was as much an agency of anarchy as of government. The house of Neville was closely united with that of York, and was even more wealthy. Warwick, "the king-maker," was the great representative of the Nevilles.

The Wars of the Roses (so called from the White Rose, which was the badge of the house of York, and the Red Rose, which, more doubtfully, belonged to that of Lancaster) passed through two phases. It is first a sort of "League of the Public Weal" against a weak king and his incompetent ministers; it became, however, very soon a savage struggle for the crown between the two rival families. It is difficult to tell the story coherently under any circumstances, and no attempt must be made here. The chief stages only can be marked.

1. The Duke of York, who at first claimed only the title of Protector and won it, soon claimed the throne, as being its rightful occupant even in the lifetime of Henry VI. The poor king, whose brain at times emerged from its clouds, could make no resistance. It was agreed that at his death Richard, Duke of York, should succeed.

The new  
type of  
nobles.

The two  
phases of  
the Wars  
of the  
Roses.

Richard,  
Duke of  
York, to  
succeed to  
the throne.

2. The king might yield; but Margaret of Anjou—energetic, fierce, and passionate for the maintenance of her son's rights—would not. She raised an army in the north, defeated and slew Richard of York at Wakefield. For a moment Henry VI. was king again.

Margaret  
of Anjou.



But Edward of York succeeded to his father's claim, and  
**Towton** was saved by the support of Warwick and of the  
**and King** City of London. The battle of Towton (1461)  
**Edward IV.** ruined the cause of the Lancastrians, and Edward  
of York became King Edward IV,

3. Edward was a good soldier, and with Warwick's help  
might have given the country the strong government it needed.

But the successful partners in rebellion quarrelled.  
**Quarrel** Edward was jealous. Warwick found himself  
**between** thrust on one side; tricked, perhaps threatened.  
**Edward** He betrayed his own past, and joined himself to  
**and** those whom he had already betrayed. He went to  
**Warwick.** the Continent and allied himself with Margaret of Anjou,

and secured the help of Louis XI. of France. Fortune  
passed from one side to the other with a fickleness that is  
explained by the fact that it was a war of military adventurers  
and mercenary armies, not a national war, nor a war of  
principles. Edward IV. had to flee, and Henry VI. was king  
again. But Edward IV. could play the game of his enemies.  
He gained help in men and money from Charles the Bold of  
**Fall of** Burgundy. When he struck, the king-maker found  
**Warwick.** defeat and death at Barnet (1471). Margaret of  
Anjou was crushed a little later. Edward and his partisans  
spared few of the opposing nobles on whom they could lay  
their hands.

After that Edward reigned in comparative peace for twelve  
years. But the atmosphere of low and material aims, of  
corruption and violence, of intrigue and murder, lasts to the  
end. In 1478 his brother Clarence was made away with.  
Parliament was rarely summoned, and was not apparently  
regretted. The king died in 1483.

The past years had been full of violence and crime; but  
there was worse yet to come. The late king had left two sons,  
of whom the eldest was twelve years old. He  
**Edward V.** occupies a place in the line of English kings as  
**and** Edward V., but from the first the one all-important  
**Richard** personality in England was Richard, Duke of  
**III.** Gloucester, who by the will of Edward IV. became the  
guardian of the king and Lord Protector. He was misshapen

in body; but capable, ambitious, and unscrupulous. His career has been made the subject of one of Shakespeare's best-known historical plays; and it hardly exaggerates the violence and moral infamy of his career. There is something in his frantic egotism that reminds one of some of the figures of the Italian Renaissance. His intrigues, lies, and murders may be passed over in this book. First he ruled as Protector. Then he aimed higher, and determined to reign as king. Edward V. was declared illegitimate because his father had been betrothed to another lady. So Richard of Gloucester reigned as King Richard III. Some have thought that he would have been a good ruler, and by his energy might have brought to an end the long disorder of England. But he had raised up enemies against himself on all sides. There were so many instances of successful rebellion that another attempt was certain to be made.

Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, would not have found a road to the English throne if accident and the headsman's axe had not removed a great number of possible rivals. **Henry True**, he had royal blood in his veins—the royal Tudor. blood of France as well as England. His grandfather had married Catherine of France, the widow of King Henry V., and had subsequently been beheaded by order of Edward IV. Descent, however, from the French royal house would not have made Henry a representative of the house of Lancaster and a claimant to the English Crown. Through his mother he was descended from the Beauforts, who were descended from Edward III.'s son, John of Gaunt, by his third marriage. Henry Tudor was the only possible representative of the Lancastrian house. He was little known, for he had lived much abroad; the coolness, caution, sureness of judgment, pertinacity, which made him the founder of a new era in English history, cannot have been known, but at least there was nothing against him and he became the rallying centre for all those who wanted to be rid of Richard III. He landed in Wales and met the forces of the king at Bosworth, **Battle of** near Leicester. Richard was betrayed rather than **Bosworth** defeated. He was killed in the battle, and Henry Tudor became Henry VII. Little in him or in his reign has attracted

the admiration of posterity; but few of our rulers have bestowed more solid benefits upon the country.

## VI

This period, and especially the last half of it, tells strongly against the view that national character is something permanent and always operative. The English have claimed (and this claim has sometimes been allowed by foreign observers) that they are distinguished for their practical political sense; that their history flows on steadily from "precedent to precedent"; that they are placable, and not so liable as some other nations to be carried away by passion; that even in times of violent controversy their political life still recognizes a high standard of right. But neither France, during the savage factions of the Burgundians and Armagnacs, or when Catherine de' Medici ruled her destinies; nor Spain in the days of Philip II.; nor Italy in the days of Caesar Borgia, present us with scenes of greater violence than those we have just glanced at. This period, moreover, in English history has as its special mark a sordid materialism, an absence of all high or ideal aims.

The first half of the period (down to the death of Henry V.) is not without its noble features. We may rightly take pride in the military achievements of Crecy and Agincourt, though all now recognize that the French war was a criminal mistake in the English king and did incalculable harm to **Literature.** Europe. That early period is illuminated also by the homely vigour and satire of "Piers Plowman," and by the humour, wit, and poetry of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales." These last are indeed a most fortunate possession. They humanize and sweeten that dark time, and make us sensible of the healthy natural life that underlay the strange reign of Richard II. During the later period there is no literature that wins the affections of the modern reader. At first sight the whole proud life of England seems to run into bog and morass. Yet we know that one of the most interesting and glorious periods in our history was about to dawn. What signs are there of the new and better age?

The love of beautiful things had not died out. English architecture, whose supreme value has hardly even yet had full recognition, still produced masterpieces. The delicate pointed style of the thirteenth century, which harmonizes so well with the character of that wonderful period, was no longer used. The more practically useful "perpendicular" style was adopted. In this style splendid work was being done right down to the end of this period. Not only in cities or universities is the interest in architecture visible; not only do King's College Chapel, Cambridge, and much of Westminster Cathedral belong to this period; but noble parish churches sprang up in various parts of England. It was a period, too, in which domestic architecture made great progress, as many a noble mansion still shows us.

On the other hand, though the Renaissance had nearly reached its zenith in Italy and had powerfully influenced France and the Netherlands, its influence in the British islands was hardly perceptible. There is little trace of its Italian passion for beauty and for speculation, or of the challenge to all accepted standards of conduct. One great practical outcome of the ferment of the time did, however, reach our shores. The printing-press was set up by William Caxton at Westminster in 1477. The invention came to England from the Netherlands, for Caxton had lived there for some time and had actually printed English books in Bruges. He was not an inventor in any way, but merely transferred to English soil a process which had already been practised for twenty years on the Continent. There was not at first any sign of the revolutionary influence that this new mechanical invention was to have on the world. The first books that came from his press reflect the taste of an age that was passing away—*The History of Troy, The Play and Game of Chess, The Golden Legend, The Poems of Chaucer*. Later there came translations from the classics—Boethius, Virgil, and Cicero. Great interest was taken in the new process by the court and nobles.

More important than any other feature as a presage of a new era was the rise of a trading middle class and the growth of the towns. There is little in England that can be

compared with the communes of Italy and Germany and, at a rather earlier period, of France. The central government had been too strong to allow any town to acquire the independence of Florence or Cologne. But in spite of all the savagery and confusion of the time (which chiefly concerned the ruling classes), trade was advancing and population increasing. The craft guilds were growing in strength. Foreign trade was in the hands of societies, of which the chief was the "Merchant Adventurers." As wealth and the importance of the trading class increased the towns received a fuller constitution. Before the reign of Henry VII. most were possessed of mayor, aldermen, and council with well-defined powers. The confusion of the Wars of the Roses had been favourable to their growth.

It is in the rise of a middle class that we see the force which is to save England from the dangers that seemed to threaten her. She seems sometimes to be hurrying to Polish anarchy; to a condition in which the state is the prey of a nobility that can do nothing but fight and is incapable of patriotism. That class had gone far to destroy itself in the vendetta of the Wars of the Roses. There was a new class ready under the guidance of a strong monarchy to give a better life to England.

Of contemporary writers Froissart and Chaucer are easily accessible, and for the later period *The Paston Letters*. T. F. Tout's volume in the *Political History of England* goes to 1377; that of C. Oman carries the story to 1485. Among shorter biographies note Oman's *Warwick the Kingmaker*; Church's *Henry V.*; Gairdner's *Henry VII.*

## CHAPTER XXIV

### The Renaissance and the End of the Middle Ages

WE marked the beginning of the Middle Ages at the point where the Emperor Constantine raised the Christian Church from its despised and persecuted state, and made it a partner with the empire in the government of the civilized world. It was the strength and influence of the Church which gave

to the Middle Ages their most characteristic features. It was from this source that Europe derived such unity as it possessed from the third to the fifteenth century, amidst all the confusions that were caused by the invasions of the barbarians and the anarchy of the feudal world. It seems best, therefore, to mark the end of the Middle Ages at the point where the religious unity of Western Europe was broken by the rise of Protestantism. The influence of the Church indeed never recovered from the blows which it received in the struggle with Philip IV. of France, and the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were full of heresy and schism over which the Church triumphed in the end, but triumphed without regaining the position which she had held in the days of Gregory VII. and Innocent III. The world was slipping from the control of the Church for better or for worse. But, in appearance, unity was preserved until Luther's challenge opened a struggle which led to a complete religious transformation of Europe, to the substitution in many countries of national churches for the one Catholic Church, and ultimately to the abandonment of the principle of coercion in matters of belief.

Where to mark the end of the Middle Ages.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century also another prominent feature of the mediæval world began to disappear. The Middle Ages knew little or nothing of the sentiment of nationality, which is so powerful a factor in modern Europe. The peoples had not yet become conscious of their separateness, and nations were not divided from nations in the clear and rigid way in which they are to-day. Internationalism is a great mark of the Middle Ages. The governments were jealous of one another and often fought fiercely; but there were agencies, organizations, and ideas connecting the people of all nations indiscriminately, and giving to Western Europe a sense of unity which it now lacks. The Church took no heed of national boundaries. Men of all races and tongues entered the ranks of the priesthood or joined one of the many orders of monks or friars. Difference of language counted for little in the Church, for Latin was the universal speech of educated men. Feudalism, too, was not a national force.

Rise of National feeling.

The Church and empire international.

The career and position of Charles the Bold which we examined in a recent chapter will show how, under feudalism, a great power might grow up which paid no regard to national frontiers or identity of race and language. The empire which stood at the head of the feudal system was essentially international, and in its claims as universal as the Church itself. Within its borders were to be found not only Germans, but Frenchmen, Italians, Slavonians; and this corresponded so closely to the ideas of the time that no one thought it **Uni-** strange. Further, the universities were only **versities.** loosely connected with the nations in which they were situated. The teachers were drawn readily from alien peoples, and the scholars passed from Italy to Germany, or from France to England without difficulty. But by the end of the fifteenth century national feeling was growing strong. It was to be found in Germany in spite of the manifold divisions of the country, but it was seen at its strongest in France, England, and Spain. In France and England the long struggle of the Hundred Years' War had made the two nations conscious of their separate existence, and in Spain a similar result had been brought about by the long struggle against the Moors.

These two great features of the Middle Ages then—the universal Church and internationalism in politics—were **The Re-** growing much dimmer by the end of the fifteenth **naissance.** century. But the sense of nationality was not the only new feeling that was emerging. New ideas had come and were controlling the thoughts, and through the thoughts the actions of men. The Renaissance reached its zenith by the end of the fifteenth century; printing had been invented, and had quickened the intellectual intercourse of Europe in an unprecedented way; explorers had seen a new world rise beyond the waves of the Atlantic. All ages are ages of transition, and the division of the continuous story of human life into periods produces often dangerous misconceptions; but at the end of the fifteenth century there were many powerful forces converging to drive the European world out of the course which it had followed for so long. This chapter will be occupied with a slight examination of some of these forces.

## The Renaissance and End of Middle Ages 463

The Renaissance is a name generally used to describe the intellectual and artistic movement of this period. The word means a New Birth, and it refers more especially to the revived study of the Greek language and of classical antiquity which flourished vigorously at this time. But there are two misconceptions about the Renaissance which it will be well here to protest against. First the movement has been traced to the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, and it is assumed that the Greeks flying from the doomed city brought with them Greek manuscripts and a knowledge of the Greek tongue to Italy. But there is no historical basis for this widely held view. When Constantinople fell, Greek had already been taught in Italy for more than half a century, and it received no extra stimulus from that great disaster. And, next, the Renaissance is not to be restricted to the revival of Greek learning. That revival was a part and an important part of the movement; but it was not the cause of it by any means. Greater poetry was written in Italy before than after the revival of Greek. Europe was already awake and eager for new knowledge, and, because it was awake, turned to consider and to study the neglected, but never quite forgotten, treasures of classical antiquity.

**Misconceptions as to the Renaissance.**

The Renaissance is best understood when it is regarded as a stage in the development of the thought of Europe, comparable with the great intellectual and artistic movement of Greece in the fifth and fourth centuries before Christ, or the change which passed over the ideas of men in the early Christian centuries. It was not due to any external event, but was a spontaneous growth arising out of the widening experiences and changing needs of the time.

**The Renaissance a spontaneous growth.**

The Middle Ages do not by any means deserve the name of the Dark Ages, which used to be ignorantly and vaguely given them. But after the fifth century there was little speculation or intellectual curiosity until the twelfth. It was then that the Renaissance may be said to have begun though the phrase is usually confined to a later period. The thirteenth century saw the

**Revived knowledge of Aristotle.**



revival of the influence of the great Greek philosopher, Aristotle. The earlier Middle Ages had hardly known his name, but in the thirteenth century an Arabic version of the Greek original was translated into Latin, and his thought, though often in a perverted form, was made accessible to Western Europe. Nor was Europe slow to recognize its importance, and the great scholars of the thirteenth century—the Schoolmen as they are called—were largely occupied with the interpretation of the new philosophy and its adaptation to the needs and ideas of the time. Their ideas and their phrases are separated by a very wide gap from those of the twentieth century ; but they put forward a great mass of speculation on theology, politics, metaphysics, and morals, which acted as a great stimulus to the age. (The greatest name is Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), who taught in the University of Naples.) But the writings of Dante show us the thought of the thirteenth century in a more attractive form than do the pages of the Schoolmen. His “Divine Comedy” especially (which belongs to the year 1300) is a mirror of all that the age knew and hoped and felt, presented through one of the greatest poems of all time. (The poem tells us of the journey which the poet took under the guidance of Virgil through the realms of Hell and Purgatory, until he met his beloved Beatrice and was led by her through Paradise and introduced into the heart of all celestial mysteries. He who would understand the Middle Ages must read the “Divine Comedy.”) Dante was eager in pursuit of all knowledge, speculated boldly on questions of theology, morals, and natural science. Above all, we may note that, though he probably did not know a word of Greek, he was fully alive to the importance of Greek literature and generally of classical antiquity. (Athens, he calls “the hearth from which all knowledge glows ;” Homer is “the loftiest of all poets ;” Aristotle is “the master of those who know.”) Thus Dante was the prophet of the Classical Revival. Other great names (though none so great as his) soon followed. Petrarch (1304–1374) exercised a profound influence over the thought of his time, and he saw the importance of acquiring a knowledge of Greek. (At the end of the century there came an embassy

from Constantinople asking for help against the advancing power of the Turks. The embassy failed in its objects, for Europe had no longer any heart for a crusade. But one of the Greeks (Manuel Chrysoloras by name) was induced to remain behind and teach Greek in Florence (1399). Soon the learning of Greek became a passion and a fashion in Italy. Manuscripts were sought for in the monastic libraries. Soon the Aldine Printing Press at Venice began to produce copies of the great classics. The Medici of Florence vied with Pope Nicholas V. of Rome in the patronage of the new learning. It soon spread from university to university. Germany, France, and England were as much concerned with it as Italy. A knowledge of the literature and life of ancient Greece and Rome had become a permanent part of the intellectual life of Europe.

This revival of classical learning had a profound effect upon the mind of Europe. It revealed societies full of beauty and nobleness before the rise and victory of Christianity; it introduced men to ideas on morality and philosophy widely different from those of orthodox Christianity; and it soon gave to the early Protestant controversialists an invaluable weapon in their power to interpret the original language of the New Testament. Further, it reopened to the world a vast treasure-house of truth and beauty, and there is no department of modern science or thought which has not been influenced by the revival. Fermenting, as it was, with the new thought, Europe could not be kept within the limitations of the medieval world.

But the Renaissance, as we have said, was much more than the revival of classical learning. It was also an artistic movement, (the most important in the history of Europe since Pericles ruled in Athens.) It produced great works in poetry, and buildings of great interest, while by the pictures and sculptures which it brought forth it gave to Europe a new sense for beauty. In poetry what came before the revival of Greek is much greater than what came after. (There is no name in Italian literature, and only one or two in European literature, to be

put in comparison with Dante, who died in 1321. Petrarch and Boccaccio wrote before the new classical movement had set in in its fullness. The great Italian writers of the later Renaissance are Ariosto (1474-1533) and Tasso (1493-1569). In style both were much influenced by the revived knowledge of the classics, though Ariosto wrote, with much humour and some irony, stories that are connected with the characteristic medieval figure of Charlemagne; and Tasso's epic of the recovery of Jerusalem in the first crusade, if its form was influenced by Virgil, drew its sentiment and its ideas from the revival of Catholicism which came during the Reformation. And if the highest products of Italian poetry came before the classical revival, modern taste would assuredly say the same of architecture. The architecture of the Renaissance, though for a time it threw into shade the great buildings of the medieval architects, is now recognized as being in most respects inferior to them. The builders of the time went back to classical models, adopted the dome instead of the vault for the roofs of their churches, and in their secular buildings developed a style simpler and less romantic than that of Gothic architecture, and one more light and airy and better fitted for the ordinary life of man.

**Painting.** The gift of painting that Italy gave to the world requires no limitation or qualification of praise. The growth of Italian art owed little to classical influence, though in its later course its subjects and occasionally its style were modified by classical poetry and statues. The pictures which Italy knew at the end of the thirteenth century were for the most part the mosaics in her churches, the work of early artists, most of them from Constantinople and the East. These have interest and often great beauty; but, as they are made of fragments of coloured glass, there is naturally much stiffness about the figures and little that is lifelike in the expression of the face. The earliest Italian pictures show the same stiffness and formality. But from the end of the thirteenth century onwards for at least two centuries and a half a long series of great artists developed the art of painting, and almost enriched Europe with a new sense. All the early paintings are religious in subject and character, for the Church was the

only great patron of art. But quickly the artists began to paint with a freedom hitherto unknown. Their figures became lifelike in pose and expression. The deepest feelings were expressed. Beauty of form, beauty of design, beauty of colour were achieved to an extent hitherto unknown. Siena and Florence were the earliest homes of the new art. Venice gave to it a magnificence and glow that the Florentines had not quite attained to. The city life of Italy assisted the new movement; for town vied with town in the patronage and purchase of the works that were produced in great numbers. Names and dates are here of little significance, but it may be well to note that Giotto (1276-1336) stood nearly at the beginning of the movement; and that it reached its zenith during the life of Michael Angelo (1474-1564), who was equally great as sculptor and as painter, and of Raphael (1483-1520). There was fine painting in Italy long after that, but it rapidly lost its old dignity and strength, and descended too often into mere prettiness and affectation.

Giotto,  
Michael  
Angelo,  
Raphael.

While Italy was thus giving to the world such priceless treasures, her own political and social life was far from healthy. Though it is hard to speak with confidence of the moral character of a whole age or people, it seems clear that in Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the passions of men met with very little restraint from any moral code or from the influence of religion. The political life of Italy was full of fraud, violence, and cruelty. Success seemed to justify all means that led to it. There was much keen political thinking, which for the most part rejected traditional views and sought to find from experience the way to success. Among the political thinkers the greatest name is that of Machiavelli (1469-1527), and his treatise "The Prince" had a great influence on the politics of his own and the succeeding ages. There is in it much acute thought, but the point that has attracted most attention is that he boldly declared that the rules of morality are not binding on statesmen. "A Prince," he wrote, "in order to maintain the state must often act against faith, against charity, against humanity, and against religion."

The sixteenth century quickly learnt the lesson and suffered bitterly from it.

The invention of printing and the first stages in its development came not from Italy, but from beyond the Alps. The precise authorship of the new invention is uncertain. In more than one quarter efforts had already been made. But the first considerable book printed with separate moveable types for each letter, the Bible in Latin, was the work of Gutenberg, of Mainz, and appeared in 1455.

The full significance of the invention was by no means apparent at first; and the printing press developed slowly. But it was at once clear how much more rapidly books could be produced by the new method than by the old method of copying, how much more accurate the copies were, how much easier to read than all but the best of medieval writing. It was not until the controversies of the Reformation period broke out that another value of the new invention was apparent: the printing press produced books so much more rapidly than the old method that it was almost impossible for authority to suppress them. The printing press was the greatest of all obstacles to the victory of the Inquisition. The printing press was set up in Italy in 1467, and a few years later the famous Aldine Press of Venice began to issue its copies of the Greek and Latin Classics. The first English printed book appeared in 1477.

While Europe was fermenting with new and dangerous stuff a new world had been discovered. The discovery of the islands of the West Indies by Columbus in 1492 was by far the most wonderful event in the age of discovery. It was the realization of a dream, that had haunted mankind for centuries, that rich and happy lands might be found beyond the Pillars of Hercules and the waters of the Atlantic. But it was only one among a vast number of voyages of discovery that took place during the century, the results of which were only a little less important. Since Greek times (and doubtless from an even earlier date) men's minds had been curious to discover what lay beyond the limits of the world they knew; what manner of people inhabited

the frozen lands of the North, and from what source the Nile came. But the particular force which brought Europe at last into touch with America was the desire to find a new route for commerce with the East. We have already seen how much the crusades were influenced by the desire of Western Europe to control the route by which the products of India, of China, and of those lands which were vaguely called Cathay, passed into Europe. At the beginning of the thirteenth century much new light had been thrown on these regions by the travels of Marco Polo, probably the most wonderful travels of which we have any record. The advance of the barbarous Turkish power, however, made all Asiatic routes difficult and dangerous. So European commerce looked for some other route. The Portuguese, under the guidance of Prince Henry "the Navigator," undertook a long series of voyages down the West Coast of Africa. Little by little the knowledge of the coast of the Dark Continent was extended in spite of baffling calms and fatal disease. At last, in 1487, Diaz reached the Cape of Good Hope, and knew that there must be a great field for discovery beyond. In 1498 Vasco da Gama reached the Malabar coast of India.

The success of Columbus was not like the discovery of Vasco da Gama, the culmination of a long series of efforts. Columbus was a Genoese by birth, and had cherished for long the dream of sailing straight across the Atlantic to find there the treasures of India and the fabled wealth of Cathay. What he needed, as the first condition of success, was a patron to support him. He found at last what he sought in the King of Spain. On October 12, 1492, after the most momentous voyage in history, during which hope and despair had been in constant struggle, he saw land. He disembarked in the Bahamas. He believed to his death that it was Asia which he had reached, and called the islands in consequence the West Indies.

For another century the work of discovery went eagerly on. It was still the wealth of Cathay that formed the chief inducement. Men sought to reach it by at least six routes; westward by the North of America and by the South of

America, and for a time by some opening which they hoped to discover near the isthmus of Panama, and eastward by the Cape of Good Hope and the northern shores of Asia, and by some route across Russia and Asia by which they might avoid the neighbourhood of the Turks. By the end of the sixteenth century most of the chief features of the Globe were known, though Australasia remained unguessed.

The many efforts to reach the wealth of Asia.

The discovery of the New World produced an immense effect on the Old. Its first effect was to divert trade from the Mediterranean into the great ocean routes, and so to ruin Venice and Genoa and to pour wealth into Antwerp and London. Later, as the New World was found to be peopled by races which could not resist European methods of warfare, the maritime states of Europe saw that there was a prize of enormous value to be gambled and fought for. The rivalries created by the struggle were one of the most potent causes of the European wars of the next centuries. In 1493 an effort was made by the Pope to avoid these struggles by drawing a line from north to south and giving all to the east of that line to Portugal, and all to the west to Spain. But this was too rough and ready a method of division, and the time was soon to come when the states of Europe would no longer regard the decision of a Pope with much respect.

Effect of the New World on the Old.

The influence of the New World upon the Old is a vast subject, one or two points only of which are here touched upon.

The influence of the Old World upon the New is a subject which is rarely considered. But there is not a more terrible tragedy in all history than that. Beyond the Atlantic there were races with many noble characteristics, and some of them with a developed and even a beautiful civilization. Upon them all came utter ruin. The sword and the diseases of Europe swept them off by millions. Those that survived lived as a despised and subject race. At last the interest and the conscience of their conquerors were touched. Something was done to keep them alive. The Christian missionaries admitted them to the possibilities of European culture. In

The influence of the Old World upon the New.

North America men of the old stock form an insignificant minority of the population. In South America the native race has been much better preserved, has mixed readily with the Spaniards and the Portuguese, and forms a large part of the foundation on which the life of the southern continent rests.

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Hallam, *Europe in the Middle Ages* ; Lodge, *Close of the Middle Ages* ; Symonds, *The Renaissance in Italy* ; Burckhardt, *The Renaissance in Italy*.







Longmans, Green & Co Ltd., London, New York, Toronto, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras

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